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CHARITY AND THE CLERGY:

BEING

A Review,

BY

A PROTESTANT CLERGYMAN,

OF THE

"NEW THEMES" CONTROVERSY;

TOGETHER WITH

SUNDRY SERIOUS REFLECTIONS UPON THE RELIGIOUS PRESS, THEOLOGICAL SEMINARIES, ECCLESIASTICAL AMBITION, GROWTH OF MODERATISM, PROSTITUTION OF THE PULPIT, AND GENERAL DECAY OF CHRISTIANITY.

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PREFACE.

THE writer of these pages is not aware that he holds any doctrine which deserves to be called infidel or heretical; but as candid criticism is not tolerated in our orthodox religious periodicals (with which alone he could affiliate), he feels driven to this mode of addressing the public. He comments freely, and at times severely, upon the religious press itself; also upon theological education, the state of religion in the churches, and various clerical and ecclesiastical practices—all of which are regarded as needing reform.

Few seem to perceive what appears fearfully evident to the writer, that our existent Christianity is almost universally corrupt, and is becoming more so continually; that unless its present tendencies be speedily reversed, a state of worse than medieval darkness will soon settle upon Christendom; not

a state of intellectual decrepitude and enslavement, but one of intellectual triumph and haughty independence; not a state in which the Church, like a besotted despot, will drag men in chain-gangs behind her bloody car, but one in which man will rise in proud supremacy, and either trample the Church under foot, or else spare her in Gibeonite degradation, to become a "hewer of wood and drawer of water" about the gorgeous Temple of Mammon! Or, to say the very least, the Church and the world will move on in harmony, neither disposed to assert its own peculiarities.

It is not maintained that the work, "New Themes," &c., suggests the only remedy needed in this emergency; others are hinted at; but it is maintained that perhaps the most crying demand of the times is for just such a reform as the author of "New Themes" and "Politics for American Christians" indicates. It will be shown, likewise, that the real sentiments of that author have either been strangely misunderstood, or been wickedly misrepresented in many influential quarters.

A REVIEW.

New Themes for the Protestant Clergy, etc. By Stephen Colwell. Second Edition, Revised. Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo & Co. 1852.

A Review, by a Layman, of a Work entitled "New Themes, etc." Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo & Co. 1852.

Politics for American Christians. Politics of the New Testament. Some Notices of a Review of "New Themes, etc." Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo & Co. 1852.

SELF-COMPLACENCY.

Reformers have usually met with a surly reception at the seats of power. The comfortable classes fear change, lest their comforts depart. Dives, Diotrephes and Demetrius, Caiaphas, Laud, and Leo X., represent classes

always existing, and always arraying themselves against the Pauls, and Wickliffes, and Miltons, and Luthers, and Galileos, and Knoxes; against the Puritans, and Protestants, and Waldenses, and other truth-finders and truth-tellers, whom after ages enshrine in the Temples of Love, Fame, and Gratitude.

But many oppose Reformers from motives much more innocent. They honestly love the present, and cannot see the truth of the Reformers' criticisms or proposed amendments. The world is only aggregate man, and what man is there that knoweth himself? The heart is deceitful above all things; who can know it? The world flatters and cheats itself. The chief characteristic of every age is self-complacency. "Surely we are the people!" No doubt, Tubal-Cain teaching his apprentices to work in brass and iron, often reflected on the perfection of art in his age, and the "old fogyism" of the days of his grandfather Adam. Self-glorification, too, is a form of human weakness which

has characterized every generation, every country, every party, every sect. And more than this, men are prone to identify themselves with certain ideas and institutions so entirely, to cluster around them such tender associations and sweet recollections, that an intimation of imperfection in those ideas or institutions is instinctively resented, like an insult to a mother. And this is specially true with regard to a man's religion. He very properly feels the most jealous guardianship over this sacred and eternal interest, and very naturally identifies his interpretation of religion with religion itself. In the eyes of the Pharisees of old, an attack upon their traditionary interpretation of Moses and the Prophets was impugning the authority of the sacred writers themselves; or an attack upon the lives of them, the acknowledged illustrators of divine truth, was denying the divine origin and the sanctifying power of that truth. Hence, in the eye of Judaism, Jesus and his Apostles were infidels. And

so has it ever been in the history of Christianity; Christians have been prone to stake Christianity upon their understanding and exemplification of it. If they understood the Bible to teach that the sun revolves around the earth, the poor Galileo who asserted the contrary was a vile heretic, if not a downright infidel. So of the doctrine of antipodes, of an old pre-adamite earth, of pre-existent death, and such like conflictings with traditional interpretations; to assert them was to raise from a thousand quarters the cry of *infidelity, infidelity.* But when the people had time to reflect and examine, they saw that the innovators were only infidel to their beloved grandmothers' *explanation* of the Bible.

"NEW THEMES" NOT INFIDEL.

Knowing these characteristics of our species, whether out of the Church or in it, the author of "New Themes" should not be sur-

prised (however much he may feel wounded) at hearing the cry of infidelity raised when he ventured to declare a difference between the Bible and the traditionary expositions of the Bible, and the corresponding conduct of the expositors. But of all the instances recorded in history, never has that cry been so *senseless* and *illiberal* as in this case. The author himself is not prepared to justify all the forms of expression which he has used in his writings; but we say with deliberation that we have never read an author who seemed more profoundly smitten with the truth, and beauty, and practical value, of Christianity than the author of New Themes. We are certainly disposed to find fault with the grouping which he makes of its doctrines, seemingly depreciating some of prime consequence in his zeal for those which he thinks have been neglected; but that ought not to prejudice our minds to the fact that in the whole drift of his writings he is paying the highest homage to Christianity. He

has done what few others have ever done—cast the *entire hopes* of the world *for time* and *for eternity* upon Christ and his teachings.

And he does this in such a way as ought not to offend the most rigid orthodoxy. For he not only acknowledges the truth of Christianity, but he acknowledges the truth of the orthodox interpretations of it. Not a single item in the Confession of Faith or the Thirty-Nine Articles does he dissent from. He affirms only their incompleteness. He finds in them all a *missing element*—one which is largely present in the Bible. Why should an attempt to enthrone that element as high in the creed as it is enthroned in the Bible, be met by such a storm of orthodox frowns as have been visited upon the head of poor New Themes?

It is no New Theme to the pulpit to discourse of the imperfection of all human performances. It is certainly a favourite theme, and a very proper one. Now though Chris-

tianity is divine, creeds are human. It is not *often* we hear men say that the Prayer-Book is inspired: or that the Confession of Faith is other than a human compilation. Then why should it be considered a strange or sacrilegious thing for a Christian man to assert the existence of such imperfections in these works of men? And when he does assert it, though in a blunt style, would it not be philosophical (we had almost said charitable), in those who do not like the assertion, to spend a little strength in *disproving* it, instead of devoting the whole of it to belabouring the man who made the assertion?

WHERE ARE THE CREEDS WITH CHARITY?

The author says that *charity* does not occupy a prominent place in the *creeds* of the churches. Quantities of ink have been spent by adverse reviewers in lashing the author, but not a drop that we know of in disproving the charge. Who has given us the page or

the line in any creed, catechism, or set of articles, where charity is asserted, explained, or enforced as a *leading* Christian duty? The Bible says, "Faith, hope, and charity—*the greatest of these is charity.*" Who, of all these reviewers, has shown any transcript of Christian doctrine which in its matter or proportion approximates to this text? Mr. "Layman," who wrapped around his red right hand all the lightnings that had been forged in a hundred places against Mr. "New Themes," and who, with great research into old catalogues and new temperance documents, undertook with combined satire and pedantry to annihilate his opponent—has given us 139 pages of answer, without touching the *gravamen* of the book he was reviewing. The first of the three "New Themes" named in the very title page of the book was "Creeds without Charity." The only valid reply that "Layman" could have made to that most important charge, would have been to bring forth the "creeds" that have "cha-

rity." We search in vain, among the various learned quotations of "Layman," for any array of charity-breathing creeds.

This point was vital, because if it be as is charged, then we cannot expect to find charity predominant in Christian character. It would be contrary to all philosophy, experience, and religion, to assert that men are better than their creeds. The very reverse is true. Men's beliefs are uniformly in advance of their doings. "What I would, that I do not: and what I would not, that I do," is the language of every honest heart, and the teaching of all history. Grant then to the author, as has been virtually done, that there is a sad deficiency of charity in church creeds, and you give him an overwhelming *a priori* argument, to prove that a deficiency at least equally great exists in the practice of churches and church members.

There is, indeed, a sense in which Christians are actually better than their "creeds," taking the word technically; but it is because they

are forced to see and *believe* things in the Bible, which are omitted from their formal creeds. Hence the general principle asserted remains true. And it is still the case that the formal creed instrumentally gives the general shape to the character.

But apart from this, why should Christian men, whether in the pulpit or out of it, take offence because imperfections are charged upon their lives. This charge, instead of impugning the truth of the Bible, only *confirms* it. The Bible makes worse charges upon human nature, and even upon professors of religion, than the author does. It does so directly—it does so historically—it does so prophetically—it does so upon the Jewish church, and upon the Christian churches. The Isaiahs and the Jeremiahs spoke in no measured terms of the unfaithfulness of the ancient people of God. And the New Testament writers are equally severe upon the churches of Corinth and Galatia, Ephesus, Laodicea, Sardis, and Smyrna. And if it were a fact, and an openly

exposed fact, that very great imperfections existed in these churches under the eye of the Apostles, why should the churches of America and England bristle up with such an air of insulted innocence, when charges far less heinous are made against them! Has the venerable doctrine of "Total Depravity" given way in these latter times to that of "Sinless Perfection?" It is to be feared that such a change, either in doctrine or in fact, would be far more trying to the evidences of Christianity than the honest admission that even yet the Israel of God has reason for deep humiliation.

Not to study the probabilities in favour of the charge against Christians in the light of prophecies about "wolves in sheep's clothing," and many mysterious iniquities that even in the Apostolic age were burying their seed in the Church to bring forth fruit in after times; nor to study them in the light of history, whose dark pages shock every reader; nor at present in the light of an extended

observation, it were enough to study these probabilities in the light of those sincere penitent confessions made before God *in prayer*. Listen to the heart-breaking acknowledgments of a David, a Paul, an Augustin, a Calvin, a Baxter, a Chalmers—ministers and people, in their writings, in the church, in the closet—and they all acknowledge an habitual dereliction far greater than is here charged upon them. Then why repel him who rebukes you for good!

WHERE IS THE LITERATURE ON CHARITY?

The author of "New Themes" likewise charges a deficiency in our religious literature, corresponding to that existing in the creeds and lives of Christians. If the charge be true in the other features of religious development, we must expect to find the same lack in everything. And the very best evidence that the charge is true, lies in the miserable attempts which have been

made to answer it. The most formal of these attempts is found in the erudite pages of our friend "A Layman." The only answer he gives to the author's assertion that we have not an able literature on Charity, is a quotation of the titles of a parcel of old books, the most of them written from one to two hundred years ago, and but one of them within the present century. Why surely, the subject cannot be a very popular one, or we should have had at least *two* works on it in our language, in the last half century—a period of unparalleled intellectual and literary activity, a period within which whole cargoes of books have been written on faith, and baptism, and apostolical succession, and all the common themes of dogmatic theology, and inter-denominational dispute. What! with all the enormous outpouring of religious literature from Tract Societies, and Sunday School Unions, and Baptist Boards, and Presbyterian Boards, and Methodist Book Concerns, and Episco-

pal Societies, and innumerable private publishing houses, can but one book be found on Charity, the production of this century and that written only five years after its commencement! As our learned "Layman" has evidently searched the catalogues, we must conclude that Charity has not received a very large share of attention.

But it might be thought that perhaps the present generation are so wrapt up in the sweet meditations of Byfield, and Rigge, and Masham, and Tutty, and Hussey, and the other ancient and venerable authors whom he mentions, that they feel the subject to be exhausted, and nothing more to be needed. But alas! we fear that we should have to search scores of Christian libraries, and many Christian publishing houses, before we should find a single one of the volumes he mentions. The truth is, the books mentioned are chiefly *theological fossils*, which are neither living themselves nor the representatives of living works.

But the parading of this catalogue is such a miserable subterfuge that we cannot dismiss it without showing that the books mentioned *are not on the subject in hand.*

The author of "New Themes," in the appendix of his last publication, exposes this fact, but we would add a few words on this point.

Without insisting upon the ordinary English meaning of the word "charity," we will allow "Layman" to take it in the broad sense of Love. Indeed we believe the latter is the true scriptural meaning of the term. We will then suppose our author to declare that there is no able and thorough treatise on *Christian Love* in the English language. "Layman" replies to this by quoting works on God's love to man, and man's love to God! This answer would be paralleled by quoting treatises on the Tariff, in answer to a call for an able and complete work on Political Economy. The tariff is a division of political economy,

but it is not political economy. And so is love to God a part of the exercise of charity, but it is not charity. Love is a universal principle applicable to all sentient beings in all their relations, and it is childish to quote treatises on particular exercises of that principle or affection as exhaustive discussions of the whole subject.

We are prepared fully to second the affirmation that no able and full discussion of the subject of charity exists in the English language; and no man need deny the affirmation until he can produce the work. The sermons of Butler on "Love God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself," the fragmentary work of Dr. Chalmers on Moral Philosophy, and the old lectures of Edwards, lately given to the public for the first time, contain perhaps the ablest discussions we have of this subject; but no one who has meditated much upon the subject, will agree that even these great and highly philosophical divines have brought it out in

all its fulness. And to speak our whole thought, we do not believe the heavenly theme can ever expand to its full proportion in any mind, whilst the atmosphere of Christendom remains so unhealthy as it now is, and has long been.

It is to be regretted that our author, in his effort to give point to his title-page, should have chosen such grating expressions as "Creeds without charity;" "Theology without humanity;" "Protestantism without Christianity." They are not only wounding, but they are not true in the form in which they are written, although true in the sense in which he seems to have meant them. We see in the Protestant world much charity (though little in proportion to what is required); we see much Christian humanity, and yet more of Christianity viewed in its primary character as the means of salvation. And in all our zeal for charity and humanity in our characters and lives on earth, we should still remember that Christianity has far more

direct and important reference to eternity than to time. And yet, the exercise of charity in our human relations furnishes the highest evidence of a heavenly character, and contributes most of all other means to persuade men to embrace the plan of salvation through Christ.

The meaning of the author seems to be that the element of charity shown to be wanting in our creeds is equally wanting in all the symbols and peculiar standards and manifestations of Protestantism, as such. He here views Protestantism, not only or chiefly in its members, but likewise in its principles. Those principles are found in protests, covenants, constitutions, creeds, catechisms, ecclesiastical acts, &c. He does not mean to contrast Romanism with Protestantism, unfavourably to the latter; on the contrary, he shows in the body of his work that he considers Romanism hopelessly corrupt, and considers Protestantism pure and right as far as it goes, and as lacking but the one element

to identify it with Christianity. If, then, Protestantism has in her standards the element spoken of, why is it not produced or pointed out? Look over the authoritative acts and doings of the Dutch, German, Swiss, English, Scotch, and American Protestant churches, and show us where any prominence is given to the inculcation of an earnest, hearty humanity. It is truly amazing to observe how little Christ-like philanthropy is discoverable among the official acts of our beloved Protestant churches.

When we go into our Bodies of Divinity and Theological Seminaries, are we there refreshed by the spirit so lacking elsewhere? We fear that there is a distressing consistency there with the scenes without. It will be remembered that Christ resolved all moral and religious duties into *love*. Do our theological writers and teachers develope their theology from this point, or do they even devote a *single lecture* to the subject? We have examined many ponderous systems of

divinity, and listened to courses of theological lectures, and we have yet to meet with even the pretence of a presentation of the subject. Doctrines of theology are piled up with Titanic hands, mountain upon mountain, along the rugged and tangled sides of which men are called to climb to the gates of Heaven; but they nowhere insist upon the climbers loving and helping one another as they toil up the laborious steep. If they do, where is the evidence of it? Show us in Knapp, or Watson, or Hill, or Dick, or any other standard theologian, any more than partial and occasional allusions to the spirit of love to man, which is so largely insisted on in the New Testament. You may say that creeds, and theological systems, and Protestantism, were meant to express only our relations to God, and therefore love to man was not an appropriate part of those standards. To put in such a plea is to admit all the author charges; and here the discussion might end, unless we were prepared to dis-

cuss a different question, viz., whether charity or love *ought to be there.* And it would not require a long examination to make it clear that since more than one-half of the Decalogue is taken up with the duties of man to man while on earth; since the ultimate attainment of religion is love; since Christ said that love to man was half the sum of human duty; since Paul declares love to be superior to faith; since John says "If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar;" indeed, since the example of Christ and the injunctions of Scripture so largely insist upon universal charity, surely the legs of Christianity are not equal if this half of Christian duties is not prominently embodied in all the standard teachings of the church.

In our hasty forms of expression we fear it may be thought that we make a divorce between what we call the divinity and the humanity of Christianity. No such meaning is intended. The whole, properly

speaking, belongs to the department of divinity —divinity in its human relations and duties. A divinity developed from the love of God spreads itself over all man's being and doing. All is to be done to the glory of God. The most trivial of human actions have their place in divinity. And all the Scriptural inculcations about charity may fairly have their place in every system of theology. The base of the theological pyramid should be commensurate with the four corners of the earth.

MENTAL PHILOSOPHY WRONG ON CHARITY.

We are profoundly convinced that a great and delightful revolution is ere long coming to pass in our world of religious ideas and habits. The truth already expressed will remain unshaken, but over it all will be thrown a sweet light, like the rosy tint of evening bathing the sides of the granite mountains. This suppression of the importance and wide

influence of love has been seen in our mental philosophy, and felt in our ordinary ideas of mental character. The word "amiable" is regarded almost as a term of reproach. Intellect is exalted far above feeling in the common estimation of men. In all this we see the same poor appreciation of love that has been shown to exist elsewhere. Our philosophy and our public sentiment must be reversed before they accord with truth and Scripture, and with the best interests of the race. Men must yet see that whilst a heart without a head is bad enough, a head without a heart is infinitely worse. The philosopher will yet admit that the emotional nature of man is superior to the intellectual. Such is the view taken by Chalmers, and we do not wonder at the crowd and excitement in the halls of St. Andrew's, when the frigid metaphysics of the schools came forth with the warm blood of exuberant emotion careering through its veins. It must be manifest to him who will consider it, that this philoso-

phy accords with what may be called the metaphysics of the Bible. Religion certainly resides in the highest region of man's nature; and religion is a thing of *emotion* chiefly. Read Edwards on the Affections, if you would see how the essence of religion resolves itself into a set of emotions. Faith is indeed strictly an intellectual act. But faith is only a means to an end. "Faith *works by love and purifies the heart.*" The characteristics of true piety are hope, fear, joy, love, forbearance, forgiveness, sorrow for sin, desire for holiness—all *tempers*, or *feelings*, or *emotions*. And of all emotions *love is the parent and the sum;* for according to these various exercises of love do the other emotions come into existence. Nothing, however, is more confirmatory of this philosophy than the fact that by the inspired writers the Deity is designated by an emotion. "*God is love.*" Can we believe that an inferior element of the divine constitution would have been selected as expressing the sum of the divine character! The Scripture

philosophy evidently teaches that the region of love is the highest heaven of being. And from this point we might bear down upon man individually, and in all his relations, demonstrating that the *ultima thule* toward which the race even here should be pressing, is the state of perfect charity, or love in each and all of its possible applications; and that there can be no state of millennial blessedness on earth until some approximation to this state is reached. Indeed, it is just from this quarter the millenium will come!

TEMPORAL INTERESTS OF THE POOR MUST BE ATTENDED TO FIRST.

We fully acknowledge the infinite superiority of the concerns of eternity over that of time, but this should not lead us to forget that whilst each individual man stays but a brief period upon earth, the *race* abides untold centuries. And that he who labours to ame-

liorate the temporal condition of man, is promoting an interest which runs an indefinite race with the ages of eternity itself. Vast, wide and *abiding* are the interests of humanity on earth, though every man's life be as the morning cloud and the early dew: and whilst the labourers soon "rest from their labours, yet their works do follow them;" being dead they yet speak. Then surely he is engaged in a noble labour, who is working for even the temporal comfort and happiness of the untold generations yet to come, and gradually to crowd and jostle one another more and more upon the surface of our globe. How wretched then their lot if love do not reign in all their intercourse with each other.

But it is a yet more important view that the spiritual and eternal interests of men are as much involved in this subject as their temporal. It is not difficult to see that a process of supply and education is necessary before the abjectly poor are accessible to the direct appeals of religion. The

remark that persons in humble life more promptly embrace, and more faithfully cling to religion, does not in the first instance apply to the most suffering class. The deprivation, ignorance, uncleanness, and universal wretchedness among this class, tend to stupify and deprave their minds, to produce in them an almost total moral recklessness, so that the direct calls of the Gospel would fall unheeded upon their ears. Gaunt hunger has no heart for anything but bread. Inviting them to church should be the *second* step in their salvation. If you make it the first, you fail. What do such creatures care for church! What taste have such debased and wretched creatures for spiritual subjects. The problem of the next day's existence on earth cannot be thrust aside for any consideration lying beyond that. And though Bibles and tracts be scattered all over their dens of misery, the word of eternal life will be only like pearls before swine. You must give food to the hungry, and raiment to the naked, and

work to the strong, and education to the ignorant, in a word, you must elevate the whole lower stratum of society, or it will be one vast and unbroken possession of the great enemy of souls.

THE WORLD GAINING ON THE CHURCH.

And the tone and labours of charity are as much needed to assist in the salvation of men in the *highest* and *middling* classes, as in the lowest. It is appalling to think how slowly Christianity makes its way among men. It admits of a doubt whether there are more professing Christians on earth now than there were a thousand years ago. It is a manifest fact that Christianity has wofully failed to keep pace with the growth of the earth's population. The race of man is immeasurably further from a universal evangelization than it was in the days of Constantine. This is a most distressing fact, and yet it ought to be known, so that we may cast about for the barrier which has

impeded its progress. We do not affirm that the whole cause has lain in a want of charity in the church; but is there not a sufficient reason to suppose that this cause has been largely concerned in the result, when we see how this great and subduing element in religion has been omitted? Supposing that the views which have been expressed in this article, are any approximation to the truth, can we be surprised that men have been repelled from Christianity? It is scarcely possible to exaggerate the power of love over the human heart; and had an ardent Christian love gone forth from every Christian bosom, and breathed itself through all the avenues of human action, surely its predominance in the world would have been much greater than has been the case. Humanly speaking, the victorious power of Christianity is gone when you present her to the world a mere "theological skeleton."

Even in this our Christian land, in which evangelical religion has in the last half cen-

tury really gained upon the population in the ratio of 10 to 4½, there are still but 3,000,000 church members out of 25,000,000 of souls; about one-eighth of the population. We have no means of ascertaining the number of church goers; but we have reason to fear that over one-half of our whole population rarely, and many of them never, enter the house of God. And the vast majority of those who attend the churches are not influenced by a religious motive. Parental authority brings the young, who, by dint of long training, are in most cases made permanent occupants of the pew, and yet very many become tired and give up their early habits. Odd or eloquent preachers attract some; others go for the mere curiosity and conceit and amusement, which are excited by all large assemblies. A large class go merely to be fashionable; especially those who are struggling upward in society, and wishing to bring themselves into notice. Men of business and of the learned profes-

sion, and candidates for office, often frequent churches on the same principle on which they put their cards in the newspapers, and in order to establish confidence, and appeal to congregational *esprit du corps.* It is sickening to think what infernal motives bring large numbers of people to our churches. True, they may receive good. But in most of such cases, they are not under a truly religious influence at all. Reduce our congregations to the number of those who are impelled by a religious influence, and "the beggarly account of empty boxes," would be far more appalling than it now is in most of our churches.

Now, scarcely a more deeply serious question could be asked than, *Why has Christianity so little attractive power in the community?* Has it no innate grace and winning sweetness, that we must account for its unpopular condition by ascribing it to the dearth of extraordinary supernatural influences? Such influences are admitted to be indispen-

sable in the conversion of men, but we fully believe that there is an organic force in Christianity, which, if embodied in the lives of Christians and the services of Christian Churches, would lead the multitudes in her train by an irresistible fascination, such as attracted the vast multitudes to listen to the discourses of Christ.

The fact is, that our existent Christianity, too careless of the interests of humanity, forgetful of her true mission to earth, has permitted herself to become fearfully secularized, and hence hampered and hardened. In one quarter it is a mere department of a godless government; in another, a thing of altars and surplices and stained glass windows; in another, a thing of philosophical speculation; in another, a thing of intellectual orthodoxy; in another, a mere instrument for some low, ulterior end. Look, too, at one of our cities, and instead of seeing each denomination sending its influence through all ranks of society, especially solicitous to do good among

the poor, we see the denominations lying in social layers, all indeed scrambling upward, but yet lying like the horizontal strata in a conical mountain; and although the sects may dispose themselves like the contents of John Bull's tumbler of beer, "froth on the top, dregs in the bottom, but excellent in the middle," yet a Christianity which is a respecter of persons is not like its divine Author. When one sees this social pyramid of sects; when he sees the pyramid in church buildings, the pyramid of seats inside of the churches, the summit in the centre of the middle aisle, and falling off to the walls in every direction; when he hears so much of pew-rents and ground-rents, and heavy debts, and sees so much "lust of the eye and pride of life" in the public exhibition which Christianity makes of herself before the world—so much reaching upward and so little reaching downward—so much provision for the rich and so little for the poor; in plain terms, so much that is proud, and ambitious, and

commercial, and vain—so much that is "worldly, sensual and devilish," he is ready to doubt whether, if the Son of Man should now appear, he would find faith on the earth at all. And what work could be more pleasing to an enemy of Christianity than to trace the early history of the various congregations in one of our large cities—to see what unchristian motives were at the bottom of the various church extension enterprises—the private jealousies, animosities, revenge, and open altercations, which drew off individuals and parties to engage in the scheme of a new church—and were he to penetrate into the miserable petty envyings, severities, slanderings, bickerings, and utter want of general affection—were he to study social differences carried out in full among members of the same church—were he to learn of persons worshipping for years in a church without ever receiving the slightest notice from any member of the congregation—were he to see persons repelled by church authorities be-

cause such *as they* were not wanted in a concern of that style—were he to listen to the gossip of societies and pious tea-drinkings—and add such observations as these to the more patent and painful exhibitions of church courts and open ecclesiastical quarrels of all kinds, not forgetting the individual lives of Christians at their business—"Oh, that mine enemy might write a book," should be the last prayer the Church should offer, unless really smitten with a desire to improve her character under the rod.

The great majority of these evils would be *directly* removed by the upspringing and outgoing of a full Christian love—and all of them removed *indirectly*.

CORRUPTIONS IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

"A Layman" seems to take special offence at the animadversions of the author of "New Themes" upon the government and Church of England, for their inhuman treatment of

the poor. Were we even sufficiently acquainted with the intricacies of the English poor law system, to venture upon a discussion of the subject, we should deem it entirely unnecessary to do so after the masterly exposure of the errors and ignorance of "Layman," which our author has given in the Appendix of his last publication. If there be any philosophy in the proverb, that "the burnt child fears the fire," we shrewdly suspect that, ere this, Mr. "Layman" has prudently concluded to let the "English poor laws" alone hereafter—at least until he has studied them in some other light than "*Wade's British History.*"

But we think that our conservative friend has equally failed in his general defence of the English Church. It seems a pity to disturb the profound and unmingled reverence he manifestly feels for all that belongs to the Established Church of England, or to hint our suspicions as to the impelling motive, which led to "A Review."

But after all that has now been said upon this subject, there is a call for yet more, until the "truth stands confessed."

Every man of tolerable intelligence knows that the Reformation in England, as compared with what it was in other countries, was a mere private and political farce. Many true, God-fearing, and Bible-loving people, were indeed scattered among the masses in the country, but the leaders in the movement generally had very different motives from those which moved in the hearts of pious and honest Protestants. Henry VIII., the most beastly of all the vile herd of kings, declared for Protestantism simply because of a quarrel with the Pope, about his putting away Queen Catherine, and marrying Anne Boleyn. And a leading object Henry had in confiscating the vast possessions of the monasteries, was to get means to buy over the clergy and the aristocracy to his cause, and induce them to declare for an independent church, with himself as head or pope! There

had grown up so much Protestant feeling in the country, that he was compelled to modify the church; and along with his counsellors he succeeded in tinkering up a sort of compromise concern, which was meant to satisfy all, from the veriest Protestant to the extremist Papist. And now to give weight and *eclat* to his newly-born ecclesiastical hybrid, he bestowed upon it the most of the monastic wealth, which was supposed to be about one-third of the whole wealth of the kingdom! For even the portion that was given to the laity was in connexion with the church; from which arose the monstrous system of lay-tithes, patronage, &c., which has been so corrupting in its influence upon the English Church. The body of this wealth the clergy have managed to keep through all the vicissitudes in the government. And this wealth not only was a wholesale robbery of the poor in the first instance, but has been a constant incubus upon the piety of the church ever since. The clergy have always been

bought and sold by this money. Henry VIII. bought them with it from Rome, and made them go into ecstasies over his new mongrel church, with its mongrel "Prayer-Book," which, by an Act of Parliament, was declared to have been compiled by "the aid of the Holy Ghost." But, in a few short years, Queen Mary, the Papist, ascended the throne, and announced her intention of destroying her father's pet, and bringing back Popery full-fledged and complete. The ecclesiastical convocation at once met, and agreed to renounce their Protestantism, confess their great sin of schism, beg absolution from the Pope, say mass, do penance, say anything, do anything, fling away the inspired Prayer-Book, and become the truest and faithfullest of all the subjects of the Pope—if—if—if what? if the Queen and the Pope would only allow them to retain—the Bible? No! their consciences? No—but *their money; their vast property in land and tithes, which had been filched from*

the poor!—A precious set of Apostolic successors those!

But alas, alas, for the penitent reformers—ere they had fairly got sober after their first carouse, Queen Elizabeth ascended the throne, and because the Pope called her a bastard, she flouted the authority of the blundering *papa*, and resolved to turn Protestant, and reinstate the hybrid of other days. And now the clergy and aristocracy who had sold themselves twice before must sell themselves again, or lose their plunder! But they promptly wheeled into line: and the gambling, drinking, and fox-hunting went on as before. It need scarcely be said that there were many truly excellent and evangelical men within the pale of the English Church, who protested against many of these mercenary and unprincipled proceedings; but they were not heard any more than they were in their protest against the Popish doctrines, rites, and usages which were retained even in the Protestant Church of Elizabeth. Thus

has God, in his providence, frowned upon this gigantic fraud on helpless and suffering humanity. He gave them what they sought—riches—but with it, "he sent leanness on their souls." "He cursed their blessings."

We could scarcely expect any other result, since the Church thus abjectly sold herself to the State.

At this day the Church of England is scarcely more than one of the departments of State. The prelates and pastors of that Church, even in the discharge of their most sacred functions, are the mere vicars and delegates of the supreme civil magistrate. To quote the words of a British writer: "Not one rite even the most trivial can they alter, not one canon, however necessary, can they pass, not one error, however gross, can they reform, not one omission, even the most important, can they supply. The civil magistrate enacts the creed they are bound to profess and inculcate, frames the prayers which they must offer at the throne of God,

prescribes in number and form the sacraments they must administer, arranges the rites and vestments they must use, down to the colour, shape, and stuff of a cap or tunic, and takes discipline altogether out of their hand. The parish priest has no authority to exclude the most profligate sinner from communion: the lordliest prelate and primate cannot excommunicate the most abandoned sinner, or suspend the most immoral ecclesiastic from his functions; and should either the priest or the prelate attempt to exercise the discipline prescribed by our Lord Jesus in his house, he will speedily be made to understand by the terrors of a *præmunire*, or the experience of a prison that he is not appointed in the Church of England to administer the laws of Christ, but the statutes of the imperial Parliament, or the injunctions of the crown."

Let it be remembered, in addition to this, that the only qualifications required for church membership, are baptism, and reci-

tation of the creed and catechism; and for entering the ministry, a decent morality, along with subscription to the formularies; and of course, where there are so many rich livings in the gift of a proud and worldly aristocracy, multitudes of young relations who are pushed for a profession, crowd into the ministry, the only necessary duties of which are a routine of written forms and an occasional short essay, which may be purchased of the booksellers, all nicely done up in manuscript, and tied with a ribbon. Indeed the strong and numerous adverse influences bearing upon the Anglican clergy create a sort of moral fatality against their purity and zeal. In many, very many individual cases, the power of grace in the heart has triumphed over these fearful influences; but when we remember how independent the pastor is of his people, his legally secured income, the all-pervading influence of the State, the many restrictions upon earnest Christian zeal, with unrestricted liberty

to be indolent, and dependence upon ungodly patrons, we must think the English clergy to be something more than human, to possess an apostolic spirit and efficiency in their labours. An English clergyman "may be ignorant and idle, he may be a sportsman and a card-player, he may be gluttonous and fond of wine, he may be proud and quarrelsome, he may be a flatterer and a parasite, he may be a hater of good men, and even covertly vicious, and yet within the intrenchments of his freehold, may bid defiance to the world's contempt and anger, as a feudal baron, from the inaccessible heights of his castled rock, hurled his defiance upon his beleaguering foes." With everything to tempt him to idleness and hypocrisy, to lead him to court the rich and despise the poor, under the constant pressure of an unyielding network of prescribed formularies which tend to repress thought, to chill emotion and baffle zeal, how could he bear a character very diffe-

rent from that depicted by the author of "New Themes?"

A late number of the North British Review, gives us a picture of the common life of an Anglican minister in a country parish.

"Here is a little outline (says the Reviewer), sketched by the writer of Gilbert Arnold, of one type of the English clergyman, and not, we fear, a very uncommon one in the south.

"Before the advent of the Arnolds, the parish had been much neglected. The previous incumbent was a rich man, who might have done great things for the poor. But having the power, he had not the will. He drove through the village, sometimes, in his high double-bodied, well-horsed phaeton, from which his liveried servant descended to deliver a message at the clerk's door; but the poor people said of him that he never entered their cottages, even to ask if there

was a Bible on their shelves." (Gilbert Arnold.)

"Such a man marches with a stately formality along the high road of clerical life, as though he hadbecome a 'successor of the Apostles,' only to preach a dull sermon once a week out of a wooden box, and perhaps to study church architecture. It is, indeed, as the author of '*Friends in Council*' says, 'past melancholy and verging on despair.'

"Meanwhile it is past melancholy and verges on despair to reflect what is going on amongst ministers of religion, who are often too intent upon the fopperies of religion, to have heart and time for the substantial work intrusted to them—immersed in heart-breaking trash from which no sect is free: for here are fopperies of discipline, there are fopperies of doctrine (still more dangerous, as it seems to me). And yet are these words resounding in their ears, 'Pure religion and undefiled is this, to visit the fatherless and

widows in their affliction, and to keep one's-self unspotted from the world.'

"The Anglican ministry," (continues the N. British,) "are, for the most part, very cold and formal—much given to descant upon certain set themes in a hard, didactic manner, and never reaching the hearts of their congregations. * * * It would often seem as though the preacher had no other object than to acquit himself of certain obligations imposed upon him, as the condition of his being allowed annually, certain hundreds of the parochial money. A fixed *minimum* of work is to be got through. It does not much matter how. The Sunday duties are supposed to be the duties of the week—the pulpit to be the limit of the sphere of ministerial obligations." (May, 1852.)

This is all sad enough, and yet truth requires that still darker shades be revealed. There is no hope of restoration until the extent of the disease is laid bare before the world.

Probably there has not been another ex-

amination into the condition of the Church of England, so thorough and impartial as that made a few years ago, by the Hon. and Rev. Baptist W. Noel. Mr. Noel was eminently qualified for the disagreeable task which he imposed upon himself, under a solemn sense of what was due to the cause of God and humanity. Himself a minister in the church, of high standing, possessed of genuine and unchallenged spirituality of character, enjoying a distinguished reputation in the religious and social world, having every external and internal motive to look kindly upon the church of his fathers, in which he had long and successfully laboured, he was as well qualified for his task as a man could possibly be. But after making a vast number of investigations, he found its corruptions so great and so hopeless, that he felt himself driven from her communion. Mr. Noel has given us the results of his investigations, in his book on "The Union of Church and State;" and these well-sustained facts, which

he gives us, are truly appalling! It does not improve the matter to say, that many of these results are attributable to the influence of the State upon the Church. It is still a Protestant Church, and the most powerful and influential of all the Protestant Churches —and we study the character and condition of this church all the more intently because of its commanding power and influence. Its connexion with the State does not render its case a peculiar one—for the most of the Protestant churches of Europe are in the same condition: and it is only adding to the disgrace of Protestantism to acknowledge that she remains contented under the yoke of the State, which is hampering and paralyzing all her free and progressive energies. The reader who feels an interest in this subject, is referred to Mr. Noel's book, to see portrayed a condition of things which ought to make him shudder and weep. We can only state a few general facts.

He represents the general character of

bishops, pastors, and people as bearing scarcely the remotest resemblance to the style of Christianity represented in the New Testament—the curates truckling and half-starved, whilst the bishops and most of the other clergy roll in wealth and repose on couches of luxurious indolence—expending far more energy in sport and in conviviality than in the appropriate duties of the Christian ministry. The poor they treat with contemptuous indifference, leaving their mental, spiritual, and temporal condition alike uncared for. He admits that there are numerous individual exceptions to this, but that after an amount of careful examinations, such as probably no one had given to the subject before, he is forced to these general conclusions. Most of the partial friends of that church cannot be expected to admit the accuracy of these statements—but an impartial Christian public will be satisfied of the honesty and competency of the witness, and hence of the accuracy of his statements, espe-

cially as they are confirmed by other reliable testimony, by history, and by what we would have a right to expect from the evil influences to which the clergy and laity of that church are subjected. Having already consumed too much space with this part of our subject, we shall conclude it by giving a single extract from Mr. Noel's book (p. 399).

"What is the actual state of the establishment? Myriads of its members have nothing of Christianity but the name, received in infancy by baptism, and retained without one spontaneous act of their own: and millions do nothing whatever to promote the cause of Christ. Its 13,000 churches are generally without evangelistic activity, without brotherly fellowship, without spirituality, without faith. Like Laodicea, they are lukewarm; like Sardis, they have a name to live and are dead. Of its 16,000 ministers, about 1,568 do nothing; about 6,681 limit their thoughts and labours to small parishes, which contain from 150 to 300 souls; while

others in cities and towns profess to take charge of 8,000 or 9,000 souls. And of the 12,923 working pastors of churches, *I fear from various concurrent symptoms, that about* 10,000 *are unconverted men, who neither preach nor know the Gospel.*"

Let every line of that fearful paragraph be considered, and especially the last sentence of it, remembering that it is from the pen of one who would have poured out his heart's blood like water to have made the Church what it ought to be; and see if Protestantism in the stronghold of her power has not reason for self-examination and self-condemnation. We have no doubt that there has been an improvement in this Church of late in *some* important particulars, but there must be a radical change in the system before piety can flourish and expand itself.

OTHER PROTESTANT CHURCHES OF EUROPE.

In commenting thus fully and freely

upon the Church of England, we by no means wish to leave the impression that anything like all the evils existing in Protestant churches are concentrated there. We could find much to condemn in the Church of Scotland, especially as it existed in the days of its moderatism and Erastianism. An intellectual orthodoxy was indeed preserved, but the power of vital religion was scarcely known. We might carry the torch of investigation around all the Protestant churches of Europe; and measured even by the standard of our American evangelical spirit, they would present abundant food for lamentation and woe.

How is it with the churches of Holland, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden? How is it with Germany, the old "land of the Reformation?" How much of the genuine spirit of Christ is to be found among the churches of Luther? What are their 16,000 ministers teaching and practising. Do 1,000 of them preach the truth

at all? We doubt it. Do half that number manifest an apostolic devotion to their appropriate work? We doubt it. Are not many of them far more concerned about their pipe-smoking and their beer-drinking, than about the saving of souls? Are not the most of them more engaged in delving into ancient lore, than in preaching Christ? more concerned in concocting and exploding rationalistic theories, really subversive of the authority of the Bible, more earnest in perusing the dreamy subtilties of a worthless and disorganizing philosophy, than in visiting the fatherless and the widow, in urging the vital simplicities of the Gospel, in ministering to the necessities of the needy, and sending abroad through the whole texture of society, those holy and healing influences which emanate from earnest piety in the heart, and from the truth as it is in Jesus? Can any intelligent Christian say that these intimations do injustice to the ministers and people of these countries?

Surely we can establish all these things by abundant evidence.

Now what is the significancy of these facts? Here is Protestantism displayed, not in abstract, but in concrete. Here it is, where it first originated and where it has been longest tried. Has it the spirit of Christ? Does it breathe either a true divinity, or a true humanity? Are its ministers and members "going about doing good," "preaching the gospel to the poor," "making full proof of their ministry," "feeding the hungry, clothing the naked," "preaching in season and out of season, reproving, rebuking, exhorting, with all long-suffering and doctrine." Are they "enduring hardness, as good soldiers of Christ." "Are they bearing the cross, despising the shame." "Are they beseeching and warning men, day and night, with tears?" Very far from it. Let it not be attempted to evade the force of these things, by ascribing it all to unavoidable human imperfection. "He

that hath not the spirit of Christ is none of his." The true Christian "has put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man, who is renewed in knowledge, after the image of Him that created him." "He that is born of God doth not commit sin." "By their fruits ye shall know them."

CHRISTIAN DISHONESTY.

There is something supremely dishonest in that very common spirit of refusing to consider impartially facts which are adverse to the perfection of the party to which we belong, whether that party be large or small. To endeavour systematically to suppress, cover over, and explain away everything of an unfavourable character, not only shows that there is more attachment to *party* than to *truth*, but is the surest possible method of petrifying that party or system, and leaving it as a stationary rock, the rest of the world sweeping by in a mighty tide. It is

not enough to say that truth in its nature is unchangeable. Certainly it is. But the grand question to every party and every man is, *Have you the truth and the whole truth?* or may there not be some deficiency in your system of faith and practice? To settle down upon the idea that you are "perfect, thoroughly furnished," is to claim an infallibility equal to that claimed by the Church of Rome. And yet, in most Protestant denominations there is just this sort of settled conviction that we are right, and there is nothing valid can be urged against us. Hence preachers, editors, and authors, arm themselves *cap-a-pie* to defend their peculiar system *just as it is, in principle and in fact.* Hence each leading sect lies anchored to its creed, like a man-of-war in harbour, although the broad ocean of unexplored truth stretches away from it in unknown vastness.

This spirit of disingenuousness is not the spirit of the Bible—whose leading character-

istics are frankness and honesty. The errors and idolatries of Israel are as fully related as are their love and faithfulness. The sacred writers tell of the wives of Solomon as clearly as of his wisdom. They tell of David's crimes as much as of his virtues. In the Gospels, they no more conceal the denial of Peter than the sermon on Pentecost. They tell as much of Judas as of John. They spread out the error and iniquity of churches and church members as honestly as they do their devotion and their soundness. No book in the world is so remarkable for its outspoken honesty as the Bible (and herein lies a strong internal evidence of its truth). And if the Church of God has not the same bold and candid integrity, it is wanting in at least one characteristic of the Word of God. "Paul withstood Peter, face to face, because he was to be blamed." And there is a moral rottenness in that system, which would shield, even from investigation, the character and conduct of ministers and people, or their

doctrines. If we cannot be always right, let us, for Heaven's sake, be always honest, and then truth and righteousness will at least get a hearing before the world. "Whoso covereth *his sins* (whether of practice or doctrine), shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."

In view of such facts as have been stated or alluded to in this article, and in the book which is now under special consideration, let us not instantly fly into a passion, and fly into the face of him who utters them; but let our wrath be reserved until we honestly and patiently inquire *whether they be true.* If not true, then let fly the whole artillery of heaven and earth against the lie—but even then remember in mercy the person of the offender, and let him be "saved tho' as by fire." But if it be true, let us do as Paul or Peter would do, if in our place, own it and shun not to declare it even before kings. This whole plan of suppressing the truth—any truth—is as unphilosophical and impoli-

tic, as it is dishonest and unscriptural. Truth is salutary, whilst error is injurious. Surely this is a settled principle—it is the principle of this age, which is scattering truth everywhere; ay, it is the spirit of Protestantism in its original and essential character. Once let the Church become fully imbued with the disingenuousness which so characterizes the world, and her beauty, purity, and power are gone—she becomes a thing of Satan, not of God. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." If he soweth lies, he shall reap ruin! The hopes of the world are staked upon the honesty of the Church!

DECAY IN THE AMERICAN CHURCHES.

Our Protestant denominations in this country, in their spirit and practical operations, certainly evince more of the true life of Christianity than the same denominations in the "old country." There is less bigotry,

less stiffness, less pride, less secularity, less moderatism. But yet there are many sore evils among us which might and ought to be corrected. And it is to be feared that as our society consolidates into something of the rigidity which characterizes all old and crowded communities, there will come upon us a great reactionary tide which will crystallize our Christianity as sharply and solidly as it is seen in countries where the same forces have long been acting. The tremendous earnestness and evangelic zeal of the times of Luther gradually subsided, and was succeeded by indifference to the truth, and indifference to the interests of the people. The Puritans, with their piety red hot from the furnace of trial, gave an impetus to piety in colonial America—which, however, gradually cooled down, as peace and wealth pervaded the community. Soon after the violent agitation of the American mind in the struggles of the Revolution—when war was done, the wave of feeling, checked in one direction,

tacked about, and poured itself into the religious world, as the baffled Gulf Stream recoils from the shore, and rushes with its warm tide almost to the heart of the Frozen Ocean. And amidst all the causes of agitation which have hitherto kept the American mind under a pressure of high excitement, religion, by an irresistible sympathy, has received a stimulating and on-pushing influence. Old things passed away in every department, and all things became new. But now that those waves, which keep the contents of the vessel jostling one against another, have subsided—and all things have fallen into distinct and determinate shapes, each department of life, instead of assisting in the development of the others, will be spending all its energies directly in developing its own interest. And the tendency is not only in social life, but in all the various lines of pursuit, for the elements of society to dispose themselves into a hard system of caste, the orders of which are mutually repulsive. Minds lose their versatility,

and get to confine themselves to particular regions of thought. This indeed will promote discovery, but it will destroy harmony. And with all the advance of improvement, men will work harder and harder in their special pursuits, leaving less and less time to think of anything outside of their particular sphere, and individuals and classes become more isolated: until the command "love thy neighbour as thyself" will become even more effectually abrogated than it is now.

Now it is the province of Christianity to counteract this selfish and absorbing devotion to worldly pursuits. But in such an age religion is subjected to unusual disadvantages. The temporal gets the start of the spiritual; and whatever men go at, it is with all their might, and will scarcely take time to listen to anything else. And inevitably (unless arrested by supernatural grace), if the spiritual cannot overcome the temporal, the temporal will overcome the spiritual. One or the other must conquer—the world must be

spiritualized, or the Church will be temporalized. Like a Father Mathew temperance reform, we fear that the paroxysms of our religious enthusiasm are ceasing, and the gangrene of rottenness is creeping through our churches. Already have we hinted something to this effect, but we have yet more to add.

The first evidence of this which we mention is a general indifference among the churches to the real solid truth of God—even to that portion of it, which is an acknowledged part of their own creed. Even the favourite theological doctrines which, up to this time, have formed the staple of religious teaching, preaching, and publishing, are losing their hold upon the public mind. This is not because these precious doctrines have been supplanted by great religious ideas of another sort, but because of religious languor and enervation; because of a diseased delicacy of the pious palate, which has no taste for aught but the tit-bits of religious sentimentalism. Look

at the issues of our cotemporaneous press, and what are they in the main but a weak, wishy-washy, everlasting flood of pious trash; namby-pamby novels, stupid tracts, silly baby-books, flat biographies, sickening sentimentalism, done up in doggerel or bespread in prose over fine white paper; elegantly-bound picture-books for centre-tables, giving likenesses of Ruth, and Rachel, and Job's oldest daughter, for what we know, with nice essays on each by bishops and doctors of divinity! Such is the diluted, attenuated stuff we have served up now-a-days for Christianity! O shades of Butler, Calvin, Edwards, weep over your degenerate kind! Behold your giant robes covering the shoulders of religious milksops. Sitting in the heavens, with what contempt must your dignified souls look down upon our coxcomb Christianity—so befixed and befurbelowed, and yet having underneath such very little body, and still less soul! How would it astonish the burghers of New York City to see an announcement of a course of

"Lectures on Justification by Faith!" We are sure the most of them would take it for a hoax—a decided hit at the olden times! Just watch the notices for Sunday sermons on particular subjects: and although there are always a plenty of them in the Saturday papers, regularly inserted alongside of notices of quack medicines and theatrical exhibitions, announcing clerical performances of various kinds; yet you search in vain for discussions of atonement, sin, regeneration—whilst you find an abundance of sermons on "Moral Beauty," "Heavenly Recognition," "Temptation;" and any number on Kossuth, Hungary, Intervention, Union, Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, Maine Liquor Law, France, Cuba, Presidential election, and all the other exciting topics of the day. And should some faithful old Calvinist advertise a discourse on "Predestination," some of his own congregation would stay at home, and others would fear the old man was getting a little unbalanced in his old age. These great subjects

which form the bone and sinew of Christianity (if not the warm blood), seem practically to be dropping out of notice. Sermons abound in sentiment, and philosophy, and secular discussions, and are often as full of "pretty things" as a shop window. But the preacher must have great courage who would choose for his subject some ponderous old doctrine, instead of the latest "nine days' wonder." We believe it was Daniel Webster who said, "Preachers now-a-days take their texts from the Bible and their sermons from the newspapers,"—certainly as withering a rebuke as can be found in the pages of "New Themes." The great idea with many is to be *popular*. The empty pews are to be filled; the crushing church debt is to be paid; the church can't afford to have unpalatable doctrines preached in their pulpit—can't afford to hear dull gospel common-places doled out to them from Sabbath to Sabbath; they want something spicy—something that "*will draw a house.*"

And then the preacher is warned to remember that there are people of other denominations present; that a certain family from another denomination is negotiating for a pew; that such a young man had married into another denomination; that a certain lady's aunt sometimes attended the church; all these being of a different way of thinking on some points, it would not do to say anything that might offend them. The preacher must be very careful to avoid interdenominational topics, or the income of the church might suffer.

So far as these things are true—and they can hardly be doubted by those who have had an opportunity of observing—there is presented material for very serious reflection. We do not consider it any advantage to the cause of charity, that the ministers cease to preach, and the churches to love, the other doctrines of the Bible. It evinces a relaxation of mind and a spirit of indifferentism, which diminishes the hope of their being in-

duced to take hold of any subject demanding thought and investigation. The stomach which has been kept on a milk diet, is not in a condition to lay hold of any solid food.

We perhaps cannot join in the tone in which denominationalism in all its forms seems to be denounced by the author of "New Themes." If you destroy the *esprit du corps* of denominationalism, you in the same proportion enervate the strength of church organizations. And if you withhold from the people the full pabulum of Bible-truth, as it is understood by the teacher, you check the development of Christian character, and produce a race of spiritual dwarfs. There is nothing gained in behalf of charity by weakening the attachment of the people to their principles, unless those principles are false, in which case they ought to be changed; but still they should be encouraged to lay earnest hold of whatever they do believe. It is by magnifying the value of *all truth* that you will be best enabled to

lead them to consider the importance of charity. If you try to belittle the favourite truth of others, others will belittle your truth. You must, if possible, be able to say, "We are both right. Your truth is true and highly important, but here is a great truth which needs to go in with the balance." And this is just what we can say in this case. Faith is true, original sin is true, but charity is true also, and we must put them together in right proportions.

Whatever tends to produce indifferentism, prepares the way for all sorts of heresies, for gradual rejection of fundamental truth, and the incoming of a semi-infidelity. One of the great wants of the Church now is a high-toned anti-moderatism. We are sick of this dodging, trimming, time-serving spirit, so rife in the religious world. It is bad enough to witness the rottenness of our mercantile morals, and wide, indeed almost universal, venality and want of firm principle in the secular press, newspaper and

book; but to see the same unprincipled spirit corrupting the great sources of religious influence is truly appalling!

THE PRESS—BOOK AND NEWSPAPER.

Not to speak further of the pulpit just now, we remark that it would amaze the plain Christian people of the country, to know the principle on which our religious literature is usually issued. A publishing house now and then sets out to please some particular class of the religious community. It acts consistently for a while, and perhaps gets the confidence and patronage of the class aimed at, but as the business is hampered in the eyes of the prosperous publisher by being confined to one class, he begins to coquet with another class, perhaps the very antipodes of the first. He presently is now and then publishing books which run right in the teeth of his first customers, but he does it so adroitly, that perhaps he has made his

fortune before it is found out that he has been blowing both hot and cold. But in most cases publishers look upon religious principles and religious books purely as an article of merchandise, and their catalogues will show an *alla podrida* as heterogeneous as the contents of a witch's caldron. The parson rarely thinks that his church Bible was "gotten up" by the same house that feeds the maw of infidelity. The sweet Miss as she presses her pearl inlaid Prayer-book to her heart, little dreams that it was put out by the same house that drives a great trade in Paul De Kock's novels.

But if the literature of men's salvation is trafficked in by men of the world just as sermons, papers, marriage certificates and butcher's meat are, we are scarcely surprised, however shocked we may be at the desecration; but our patience is clean gone when we see an analogous spirit exhibited in much of our religious periodical literature. In a large portion of them, the great

idea is to conduct the journal so that *it will pay;* to have a villainous squinting toward mammon while professing to serve God. This great phalanx of religious newspapers consists, in the main, of so many competitors in the race of fortune-hunting, and they are often much more concerned to break one another down, than to combine in developing great Christian ideas, and carrying forward great Christian enterprises. They much more frequently filch an article from another without credit, than acknowledge merit in a rival. Even papers representing the same great classes of opinions rarely agree in advocating anything. If one starts an idea, others oppose it from mere jealousy. They preserve a great taciturnity about one another, until an opportunity offers of making a drive against some luckless editor who happens to let slip something that an ungenerous competitor can make capital of. Of all the numberless newspapers in the land, you can scarcely

find two who will ever join harmoniously in urging forward any scheme of good. If one paper compliments another, it is because there is no chance of their interfering with one another's success, and in some instances it is done to disoblige a rival. And as to the actual contents of these papers, what are they? Chiefly flat letters of foreign correspondents, who are paid to write, whether they have anything to say or not; fourth-rate essays on familiar commonplaces, columns of news from the daily papers, disingenuous notices of books which are not read, receipts for housewifery, advertisements about general matters, hasty editorials on an unvarying set of topics, complimenting friends, and (we were going to say), cursing enemies; great on little matters, and little on great matters. We could excuse mere imbecility, if there were an honest, manly, outspoken policy pursued; but usually it is the very reverse. The policy is to *please*, and not to advocate

truth. A sentiment may be admitted privately by the conductors, and yet if it would run counter to the prejudices of their patrons, it is denied a hearing. Hence our orthodox religious newspaper press is the most stationary of our literature, and hence it is practically reactionary. Frequently indeed the column of book notices will contain a sneer at a certain book, such as "New Themes," whilst the editorial column will contain some of the ideas of the same book. But there is no bold, manly laying hold of a new and difficult subject; no earnest, inquisitive searching after truth. An idea must have the *imprimatur* of at least one generation of divines before it can receive an elaborate treatment. They are afraid to commit themselves to an idea until the world in some other way has found it to be good and true, and then the ponderous editorials come lumbering on to the field after the battle has been won, and like Jack Falstaff, hew and hack the bodies already slain. They

are mostly "conservative" (as they ought to be); but their idea of conservatism is fighting off all new ideas, until everybody believes them, and then putting them into the list of their *loci communes*, to be put forth in all sorts of shapes, as the boy makes his piece of putty now into a ball, then into a bird, and again into a shoe; but still it is the same putty all the time.

But let us not be understood as opposing religious newspapers. We think them highly valuable even as they are, and many good and some able men write for them, but we think they lack point, and candour, and ability, and they fall far short of their duty in laying hold of the new phases of thought which are turning up every day. They are too scary, too time-serving, too mercenary, too deficient in kindness and magnanimity.

There is one small class of periodicals which deserves the severest castigation. It is that which professes loudest a love of union, liberality, and catholic evangelism; but their

union means truckling to several parties instead of to one; their liberality means freedom to abuse men and things obnoxious to their patrons, and add spice to their papers by a free use of every sort of *ad captandum* material culled from politics, music, philosophy, gossip, or scandal; their catholic evangelism means keeping the bulk of the truth of God out of sight, and courting the greatest number of Christians who can, by an occasional pietistic whine, be baited into the ranks of their admiring spooneys, whose admiration is valued at precisely the amount of their subscriptions.

"NEW THEMES" AT FAULT.

It will be seen from the foregoing remarks that there is at least an apparent difference in our estimate of the spirit of the times and that made by the writer whom, for the sake of brevity, we shall call "New Themes." He seems to consider the spirit of our existent Protestantism eminently *doctrinal*. We

think that such it was not long since; but that now it manifests a singular want of sturdy principle of all kinds. Its standards of course remain the same, but in some quarters there is indifferentism, and in others entire and acknowledged defection, in regard of these standards. When there is a discussion of principles at all, it is usually a discussion among the members of the same sect. It is Methodist vs. Methodist, Episcopalian vs. Episcopalian, Presbyterian vs. Presbyterian, Baptist vs. Baptist, Quaker vs. Quaker, rather than each sect rallying around its hereditary principles, and boldly maintaining them as the truth of God. Even the proselytism that is the chief study and practice of some sects is not a warfare of principle, but a sneaking form of Jesuitical intrigue. It proceeds on the system of seducing the young and unwary, rather than converting the opponent by honest argument. It is an assault of air-guns, deadly but soundless. Their principles are masked in annuals, engravings,

nouvelettes, biographies, pious meditations, and all the manifold seductions of social appliances, whilst open averment and assault are studiously avoided. The poison is so intermingled with syrup, that the patient is fully drugged before he knows it. And this plan of operations is successful just because the people, especially the younger portion, hang on to the churches of their fathers by the sole tie of habit. Very few inquire or are taught why they are in one church rather than another; and any direct attempt to explain differences is commonly met by opposition. The people have a sort of charity for others, which is worse than bigotry—not that charity which *believeth all things*—not that which is the product of an intelligent faith, but that easy indifferentism which is without faith, which prefers the stagnation of the pool rather than have their indolence stirred by a ripple. Such charity is a vice; and that charity alone is to be commended which is the efflorescence of a strong root of

principle. As true liberty is impossible without a rigid system of law, so true charity is impossible without a firm basis of doctrinal truth. It is the *truth* which must make us free—free from sin, from error, from bigotry, from prejudice, from cant. No genuine charity is possible on any other plan than as the top-dressing of a solid sub-soil of theological truth; and to attempt to have a valuable charity apart from this, would be as vain as to attempt to keep the air of your garden scented with a favourite perfume apart from the plant which exhales it.

Whilst, however, "New Themes" and ourselves may differ slightly in our understanding of the spirit of the living age, yet in the principles just stated we do not apprehend that there would be any material difference of sentiment between us.

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARIES TO BE WATCHED.

This paper was not designed to exhibit the slightest literary finish,—and if it has

any value, it is only for the honest expression of sentiments, which are either grossly slanderous or are deserving of serious attention. No quarter is asked of that class of critics who digest their roast beef over the new publications they like to receive to fill their libraries, despatching several 8vos and 12mos, besides a raft of sermons, speeches, and "stories for children," in three or four afternoons, and then inditing a few paragraphs about each, which may easily be seen to evince a blind prejudice—a reckless party spirit—a total misapprehension of the work —or show that these notices are like the wood-cut which the "Western Editor" (that butt of eastern wit) used successively for a President, an English lord, a murderer, a parson, and the "razor-strap man." People there are, no doubt, who still set a value on such flimsy criticisms. But the discerning portion of the public have about as much respect for such "notices" as they have for the "signs of the moon" in planting potatoes.

But of our candid reader we must ask pardon for leading him in such zigzag fashion through this grave subject; but, really, it is the best we can do under the circumstances in which we write, so he must commence his practice of the grace which we *inculcate* rather than exemplify, by "forbearing" impatience with our doubling, jerking gait. We have a good many ideas on this general subject, but we scent them up, or scare them up, much as the hound does the hares he is hunting in the cedar thicket, following hard after whichever one happens to rise until it is run down, and then starting another; and it may be that the same one is chased awhile, then left for another, to be returned to, perhaps, several times before it is fairly exhausted or disposed of.

And we must also be permitted to say that, although we may sometimes indulge in light remarks, we do not view this whole subject in any other than a most serious aspect. We are dealing with what may be considered the

sum of human hopes, and we are incapable of mockery on such a theme.

We now revert to the peculiarities of our Protestant ministry in this country. Many of the peculiarities of the present generation of ministers are attributable to the very recent adoption of the system of education in *theological seminaries*. We consider this system, in *its possibilities*, very superior to the system of private reading under an old minister—which, whilst it had many advantages, and answered well for the "times of men's ignorance," would by no means answer for training the kind of religious teachers demanded by this enlightened and investigating age. But the seminary system is one fraught with gigantic evils, unless it be watched with a jealous eye, and be kept in a flexible and constantly improving state. It is no part of our design to go into a full discussion of this subject; but there are some views of it pertinent to our object, which we take leave to present. All the leading denominations have

such schools, and what we have to say will apply to all alike.

Let us consider this system in its natural tendencies; first, upon the professorial corps; second, upon the pastoral life; and third, upon the Church, as a body;—the bearing of all which upon mankind in general will be easily seen.

1. In commenting upon the tendencies of the seminary system, as affecting the complexion of the professorial corps, we wish to be understood as speaking of causes which, as yet, have had too little time to produce general or very noticeable results; and hence the careless observer may at once declare our views unfounded; but we believe that time and a close observation will verify the main positions we shall take.

It is obvious to all that this system will create a class of *scholars*, whose attainments will very far exceed that of the pastors, as a class. This we advert to as a fact, which may be for great good or great evil. It is

the generation of a gigantic estate in the Church which may prove an impregnable bulwark, or a traitorous usurper of the throne of power—which power may be used to extinguish independent thought on the one hand, or to instil dangerous and seductive error on the other.

In different denominations the professorial mind will be projected in different directions, depending in a measure upon the leading peculiarity of the denomination, and will incline to run into an heretical exaggeration of those peculiarities, not by laboriously working in the practical field of these peculiarities so much as by being seduced on in the direction indicated, into regions entirely beyond the sympathies of the existent Church.

For example, if it is characteristic of the sect to make a large use of reason in theological matters—to believe doctrines, not because God says so, but because they can maintain them in other ways—then their

seminary theologues are in special danger of rationalistic errors.

If the peculiarity of the sect be an undue elevation of the mere forms of religion, then you may expect to find the seminaries the great fountain-heads of the doctrines of sacramental grace and ecclesiology.

If the tendency is an undue subjection of the mind to the "letter which killeth," then the teachings will be confined chiefly to a barren exegesis, whose sole object is to compel the Scriptures to yield a foregone conclusion, and to explain away all other interpretations, and practically to make little use of those portions of Scripture which are not needed in the establishment of a long rounded and finished system of doctrines.

We regard the tendency to error, or exaggeration or omission (as the case may be) much greater among theological professors than among pastors, because they are removed from the checks and balances which belong to the life of the pastor, and

which really tend to soften and neutralize any error or omission in his system of belief. The body requires for its health both repose and vigorous action, and the mind to be safe and sound, must combine study and action. If its life is all action, it becomes dwindled; if its life is all study, it becomes bloated. The professorial life is spent in the study and in the chair. The professor's mind dwells in a different world from the pastor's. The details of pastoral existence soon become insipid to the mind of him whose thoughts are borne away habitually to vast fields lying out of all common sight and sympathy. Quietly embosomed midst academic shades, the din of actual life is forgotten. The strife of sects dwindles into insignificance beside the great controversies waging in his beloved black-letter literature, or the giant errors and infidelities which he beholds afar off. What cares he for the "mode of baptism," for the question of liturgies, or the differences in

Church Government, when his eye is full fixed upon the "Great Beast," or his thoughts drowned in the ocean of German Atheism; so that when his pupil goes forth he almost expects to meet Spinoza at the first corner, or to be called upon to fly to the deliverance of some victim under the horn of the "Beast," and if it should be only a Baptist he meets, he cannot give him a single decent reason why he should not go under the water at once. We give it as a decided tendency of their position, that professors are gradually led away from the region of every-day activities. It is no reply to this, to say that the same objection lies against the chairs in our literary institutions. We believe the objection valid against both, but as being much more *serious* in its bad effects in theological than in other seminaries of learning: more serious, because the college is not depended on to furnish the *practical* training for any pursuit, whilst the seminary, like the moot

court and law office, the hospital and dissecting-room, the clerkship and apprenticeship, the normal school and the agricultural college, to other pursuits, is meant to give the immediate practice and final training for active life.

Another evil tendency in the present system is for the professor to *exalt learning above training.* Hence the professor is chiefly concerned to cram the pupil's mind with other men's thoughts, giving him very little encouragement to think for himself, and very little opportunity to exercise the very faculties which are in incessant and prominent demand in the pastorate. Hence theological *education* narrows into the attenuating system of mere *inculcation.* The professor looks upon his class as his *audience;* and if he catechizes them at all, it is that they may retail to him his own lectures or their gatherings from other theologues to whom he has referred them.*

* No great respect is due to *mere* elocutionary exer-

Living thus in a world of theological literature mostly of past ages, the professor is almost absolutely cut off from all opportunities of studying *man*, individually or in

cises, especially when conducted by ordinary professors of elocution, who, as a class, seem doomed to rank with teachers of music and dancing. This may be because a man capable of this is capable of a better business. But the kind of training we think needed, is that which gives the student thorough mastery of his own powers and of every idea which enters his mind. Let the amount of acquisition be reduced and clarified, and more time be devoted to requiring the student to fasten the framework of every subject *in his mind*, instead of accumulating such undigested heaps in his note-books, and to requiring him to call up promptly, and deliver fluently his thoughts upon the great leading topics of the Christian system. Let him be taught to be a ready, self-possessed, clear, lively, *speaker*, to be a *man* outside of his study and away from his "notes." Let him have a chance too to form a style more modern and graceful than that of the divines of the last century, so that when he comes into the world he will speak the language of the people, and not a strange, antique dialect, like a Rip Van Winkle who has been slumbering since the days of the schoolmen.

society. His thoughts are projected in a different direction. If he is not carried beyond the orthodox bounds of his system, he remains like a giant in his castle, whose life is spent in pacing around on his walls, and letting fly his catapult against all manner of foes, real and imaginary. He regards his fortress as perfect, and considers the hopes of the world largely involved in its remaining just as it is. The immured theologian cannot know much of the actual workings of Christianity among men. Newspapers and statistical reports cannot convey to him any distinct impression of the detailed collisions, defeats, and conquerings of Christianity. But worse than this, he can never derive a suggestion from the world of man; he can never see actual wants and sufferings that are in the world. The strangest story he could listen to, would be the detailed experience of a pastor. Not seeing anything of it himself, he has but little sympathy with the statements which

are made concerning it; and hence, never studies how Christianity may be made more practically operative in society. The hermit, who long since went from the inhabited plain, to spend his life in the valley behind the high mountain range, cannot be expected to see the world or to study its wants; and when the professor retires behind his great mountain of *Divinity*, how can he see through such a mass to the living world beyond? And this valley is as *cool* as it is retired. The warm breezes of the plain are chilled ere they reach his heart, until even the stray wanderer from the haunts of men is felt to be an intruder.

These remarks take it for granted that this professorial corps will not be popularized by frequent appointments from the world of working pastors. We fear that unless the Church is put upon her guard, she will have very few practical men as the instructors of her candidates for the ministry. There will gradually grow up in and

around these seminaries, a scholastic aristocracy out of which the vacancies will chiefly be filled. Students of superior talents will be singled out by the professors and friends of the institution, and encouraged to study with direct reference to professorial chairs. They will remain long as resident graduates, will be appointed as sub-teachers, and will acquire a deserved reputation as scholars, and as communicators of knowledge. Through the various avenues of influence they will be put prominently before the churches, and the selection will finally be made from this class, whilst the working pastors will rarely present a candidate whose *scholarship* and *reputation*, will enable him to rival one of these "remarkable young men," who has all his life been vegetating in the shadow of institutions of learning.

And at any rate, changes are of rare occurrence in small faculties. What Mr. Jefferson said of office-holders under govern-

ment applies partly to incumbents of all such offices—"They rarely die and never resign." At any rate, the introduction of an occasional man "fresh from the people," (as the politicians say), cannot change the established tone of things he finds there. Instead of changing the Seminary, the Seminary changes him, and in a few years he becomes the veriest stagyrite of them all.

Another danger is that theological seminaries will come to consider themselves as the first and highest estate in the churches. Their officers are conscious of being the most learned of all, they mould the pastors, they write the weighty books, and conduct the highest class of periodicals. A sense of their dignity will grow upon them, until they will take to task the highest Church courts, as coolly as the pedagogue switches an urchin.

2. We proceed briefly to consider the influence of these institutions upon pastors, who are educated in them.

It is an old saying, "Like priest, like people," and we may add, "Like teacher, like pupil." The candidate for the ministry, after having spent his life, up to that time, chiefly in the school-house and college-hall—his thoughts, for four years past, having been expatiating through the planetary spaces, the society of the ancient heathen republics, and the abstractions of mathematics and metaphysics—his intervals of time having been spent in lounging—enters at, say twenty-one, the walls of the seminary, and lays his head under the hydraulic press of a theological course, where it stays for three years, if not four. His activities consist in turning over lexicons, reading commentaries, and Church histories, and rummaging among bodies of divinity. His will is under the control of the professor, whose lectures are his law, and under whose direction, he explores the ruins of the past. The most of his acquisitions he commits to paper, and if, at the end of his course, a fire should consume his

manuscripts, he would feel as light and lost as would his professor without a manuscript in the pulpit. His crammings lie so confused in his mind, that if he were suddenly called to explain the way of salvation before an audience, he would scarcely know what to say, or how to say it. Give him time to overhaul his notes, and he will give you hours of discussion on each step. But his powers have been stunned, if not crushed. His knowledge manages him, and not he his knowledge. He has no ready command of his faculties, or his ideas. The great business, which he went to acquire, is yet to be learned, viz., *preaching*. He has no conception that ideas are to be sought anywhere but in his theological repositories. His style of thought and expression is that of the lecture-room—his delivery, ditto. Passion, elegance, and point, in composition, fluency of speech, vivacity, adaptation to real life, ardent love of men, are things undreamt of in his philosophy. In the parlour he is wretched,

and excites the commiseration (if nothing worse), of all around him. In the pulpit he is stiff and precise. He passes along through his abstruse and logical discourse (copied out of his note-book), coming over technical words and phrases, and employing a diction a hundred years old. Few understand him, still fewer follow him through, and all vote him a bore. Poor fellow, he has not finished his first day's work, until his dyspepsia is on him hard, and he feels like a lost country boy in the heart of the carnival. *People, customs, preaching,* are the strangest things to him in the world. Who would have thought that seven years' hard training could have so *unfitted* him for his business! He feels much as a cadet may be imagined to feel, who has been, for years, learning "fortification and gunnery," but who finds himself on the field of battle, all surrounded by arms, which he has never learned to load or to point. It need not be said that some youth triumph over their disadvantages, by

reason of native superiority, but who that knows the reputation of "clerical apprentices," needs any evidence that what we have stated is true of the graduates of our seminaries as a class.

Of course, these young prophets begin presently to work loose, and gradually to find out what they are in the ministry for. But they soon find out, likewise, that if they retain any hearers, they must dispense with much of their theological lumber, and, in some way, take an entire new start. Now, here is the critical point. Fortunate is the youth if his chilled piety revive, and he address himself, solemnly and earnestly, to the saving of souls. This is sometimes the case, but not always —we fear not usually. His common sense tells him that he must *popularize* himself, or his audiences will be as small as was Dean Swift's, when he began, "Dearly beloved John." Had the doctrines of his creed really taken distinct hold of his intelligence, and his feeling, had he been trained to master

and wield his ideas, nothing would have been wanting, but to bring out, in a clear and easy form, the staple articles of religious belief, to have engaged the attention of his hearers; but attributing the lack of interest in the people, not only to his manner, but to the doctrines themselves—he concludes to select new topics, and to cultivate a new style. He has many alternatives. He asks himself, shall he become elegant or vulgar! Shall he study poetry, or the newspapers! Shall he be satirical, or sentimental! Or, perhaps, he had better be philosophical, than any! Shall he be radical, or conservative! Shall he go to Union-saving, whether it is in danger or not, or whether it is any of his business or not! To flatter hungry merchants, shall he say there is no "Higher Law" than the Constitution of the United States, and thus deny his God! Shall he turn eulogist-general of dead statesmen, or lay himself out in the "Maine Liquor Law!" Shall he advertise himself freely in the newspapers, and

get up all manner of raree-shows in his church! Shall he get an organ or band of music in his gallery, and hire stage-singers to do up his God-praising, or shall the Psalms be sung as through comb-teeth! *Something* must be done, that's certain! But whether it shall be demagogical clap-trap or esthetical clap-trap is the question! If he determines to be genteel, then the tailor, the toilet, books of etiquette, an occasional slap at the "Liquor Law," and "The Irish," goes a great way. If vulgar, then a dash of the free and easy, a sneer at "up-town," and a study of the slang-whanger's vocabulary, soon get him in the way. All this is a reaction from his bad theological training, which sent him out without a single qualification for his office, except book-learning, and without a mastery of that.

To take another view, let any one look abroad, and see the mode in which ministers, even of a serious, evangelical spirit, especially in our large cities, spend their existence.

Their lives may be said to consist in elaborating and pronouncing discourses from the pulpit. A "preaching from house to house," or a serious pastoral visitation and personal supervision of the young, is a department of Christian duty that is almost wholly neglected. The habits of the seminary continue: he is absorbed—often destroyed—by his cloister-toil. Now, what excuse have the servants of Christ for this sort of monasticism—for withdrawing their influence from the world for six days in the week, in order that they may make a display on the seventh?

Such being his isolation from his own people, how can he sympathize with suffering humanity outside of the churches, or even know of its condition? Pastors scarcely know the condition of the families in their own parishes; how can they know of the miseries under which the thousands of poor and needy suffer, on their very path to their churches? We might take the very men of distinguished piety mentioned by "A Lay-

man," and venture the assertion that they never were in the habit of perambulating amongst the abodes of wretchedness in our cities. According to the established habits of ministers, as to pulpit preparation, it were physically impossible for them "to go about doing good" in the manner Christ did—impossible for them to act the Samaritan, or to exhibit a sample of James's idea of "pure and undefiled religion." It is scarcely possible to suggest a remedy for this most unchristian system of pastoral existence. Individuals cannot depart from the established custom without dissatisfying their congregations, and perhaps forfeiting their living. But church judicatories ought to interfere.

It is easy, then, to account for the fact that the clergy are so stiff and stationary in their ideas and modes of thought. They live a retired, tread-mill life, having no time or opportunity for independent thought and observation. Each becomes identified with the interests of a certain congregation, which

in most cases has gone beyond its means in building a house of worship, and can give their pastor a decent salary only when they are extricated; and every motive of affection to his people and love to himself, combine to bury his life with theirs. So that each church is a sort of independent barony, absorbed in the business of self-preservation.

3. Enough has been said already to indicate our view of the influence theological seminaries are likely to exert on the churches. The seminaries, having the distinguished scholars, the book-writers, the review editors, the large libraries, and, more than all, the educating of the ministers, they will gradually (unless watched) rise to the first power in the Church, and infuse their spirit into the remotest extremities of the body. The people who look to the ministers, and find them drawing their life from the seminaries, naturally imbibe of the same current. The *opinions* and the *pronunciamatoes* of the seminary aristocracy will outweigh all other

decisions and enactments; and woe be to the wight who then sets his face against the current! And with all the occasional aberrations of desperate young parsons, still the great eye of the Seminary, looking down on the ministry, will fascinate the mass of them into a charmed quiescence. And when the day comes for the great Seminary to be "made mad by much learning," the great eye will charm only that the conquered Church may receive the envenomed fang, and deadly error be sent through all her veins.

All these evils, we believe, may be averted by suitable and timely efforts; and their vast capabilities for good be multiplied many fold over what they have yet reached.

SALARIES — EDUCATION SOCIETIES — PROUD POVERTY.

Another disadvantage under which the clergy labour, lies in the difficulty they have

in living on their salaries. If we insist upon ministers imitating their apostolical predecessors in *all respects,* then they are better off by far than they ought to be. And whilst we are not disposed to insist upon such a necessity, yet it becomes a very serious question to determine how far clergymen should follow their people in the rapidly-increasing extravagance of living. If the principle be a sound one, that the pastor ought to "live *as well*" as the most of his people, then it will not be many generations until our American clergy will rival the English Bishops in the largeness of their incomes, and the splendour of their dwellings, and the sumptuousness of their tables. Already, in our country, clergymen are receiving salaries as high as *eight thousand dollars per annum,* and the tendency is constantly upward. And in our cities, the social ambition of pastor and people stimulates the desire to surround the pastorate with all the elegance their means will admit of. And the temptation is strong upon

the pastor to flatter the rich, and to speak his rebukes against their worldliness and vanity in the blandest tone imaginable. And if the pulpit is thus to be bribed to wink at and even imitate the luxurious tendencies of the age, there is no power short of a miracle that can arrest the fearful tide of Christian worldliness and self-indulgence. If the clergy will not live lives of self-denial, how can their parishioners be expected to do so?

But it is generally admitted that "they who preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel," and when the people have enough and to spare, the clergy should receive enough salary "to free them from worldly cares and anxieties," in order that their whole energies may be thrown unhampered into their high vocation. But, in point of fact, they are generally crippled and secularized by the poverty with which they have to contend. By scores and hundreds, they fly from the ministry into college professorships, which might be better filled by laymen—into school-

teaching, into farming, into snug ecclesiastical offices, into newspaper editing, and various departments of secular literature. So that, probably, the great preponderance of ministerial time and energy is not given to the direct work of the ministry at all. And as colleges, academies, boards, secretaryships, agencies, newspapers, seminaries, are multiplied, whose emoluments, being usually fixed by the clergy themselves, range far above the ordinary salaries, an increasingly large proportion of the ablest pastors will be drawn from their work. In fact, these offices, and a few large pastoral salaries, will become the *prizes* in the Church, on which the multitude of starving pastors will fix their longing eyes, and for every vacancy there will be such a scrambling and candidating, as should make the Church mourn and weep!

We fear that there is too much truth in the impression that the ministry, as a class, command less respect in society than they did a century ago. If it be true that there is

less spiritual-mindedness, and less earnest, self-consecrating devotion to their noblest of works than formerly, then we need go no farther for a reason. If the remarks we have made about the secularized condition of the Church, have any foundation in fact, then are we forced to believe that "like people, like priest," just as "like priest, like people." These intimations are made in love and sorrow. But, if true, it is high time the alarm were sounded.

It need scarcely be said, that we are no advocate of exclusive caste in Christian society—but common sense makes it plain, that a certain degree of refinement of character is demanded for ministerial success, unless a rare native genius enable him to succeed, in spite of it. Coarseness and want of tact are unfavourable to ministerial acceptability in all classes of society. His relations to the community are very different from those of any other man. He has imperative need of the utmost gracefulness, and most delicate

sensibilities, in dealing with the religious nature of his fellow-men. A rude shock to the agonized soul may be fatal, and refined natures, whether in the cot or the mansion, cannot unburthen their heart to a boor. And every one can perceive, at a glance, how necessary a qualification it is in the minister in order to be an acceptable visiter among well-bred people, that he should move with practised ease through the numberless civilities of social life. And in the pulpit, too, the whole air and style of expression need a *Pauline* grace and urbanity, even when dealing out the severest reproofs, and wielding the grim terrors of Sinai.

The tendency of the times is very powerfully to recruit the ministry with youth, who though worthy of high respect, yet lack the qualifications alluded to. We may care little for it, but it cannot be denied that already the office of the minister is regarded, in a social point of view, as one of the inferior positions in life; and this, too, not merely

among worldlings, but among Christians. The general poverty of the office and rudeness of its incumbents, lead even Christian parents to dedicate their sons to other professions. At the same time, the office being a temptation to those in different circumstances and education, societies offering ample facilities for entering the office, and even searching out and pressing in such as give any tolerable promise, the proportion of really unqualified men grows larger and larger every year, and in the same proportion does the office lose its standing and effectiveness in society. Now we own to a hearty contempt for social arrogance, and claim a superior admiration for what are called the middling and lower classes. But we view this subject precisely as the excellent and gentlemanly author of "Clerical Manners" viewed it, merely as a part of ministerial qualification for usefulness in his office; precisely as we view the study of rhetoric, or any other acquirement of theo-

logical training. The clergyman ought to be a scholar, because the duties of his office demand it; he ought to be an orator, to move and persuade the people; and for equally valid, if not equally important reasons, *he ought to be a gentleman;* and ought from his youth to be trained to practise the urbanities which belong to polite society. We are far from believing that these opportunities are confined to the circles of the rich and the fashionable. We believe that, as a general rule, the creatures of fashion are the most thoroughly ill-mannered of all classes in society; and that true refinement is consistent with all spheres of honest life—but there is a certain furniture of what you may call *conventionalities;* unattainable, except in the private circle of those who have leisure for indulging in social enjoyments, and a knowledge of which is very essential to a general ministerial usefulness—essential to that universal adaptability, which Paul describes as "being all things to all men," that

by the employment of all means he might save some.

Did the circumstances of an humble origin promote in the ministry a true humility, and love for the poor, we could never have written the above; but one leading reason for writing the above was, that the *very contrary is the case.*

He has studied human society to little purpose, who has not seen that those who suddenly rise above their native sphere, are apt to be the most haughty and supercilious of all classes in society. De Quincey remarks, that he has noticed that the most punctilious and assuming class, in English society, are the bishops and their families. Being suddenly introduced from a lower grade to a place among the magnates of the land, and wishing to make sure of a social consideration corresponding with their rapid elevation in position, they are the most careful, of all others, to assert their full dignity, and to detach themselves from all that would remind the world

of their late associations. And throughout society they are the *Tittlebat Titmouses*—the "upstart aristocracy," who are the most hyper-lordly, and contemptuous toward the poor, of all others. Clergymen are made of the same stuff with other people, and although we believe them, as a class, to be the purest of all, yet we cannot hope, that when they are raised from obscurity to a comparatively high elevation, they will be free from the temptation to forget whence they originated, and to become so solicitous to fortify their claims to their newly-acquired dignity, that they will, as far as possible, detach their attentions and sympathies from the humbler associations of their youth. They may yet, indeed, chime in with the fashionable whine of the community about the sufferings of the poor, and preach sentimental discourses in behalf of some benevolent society—but as for the earnest, practical work among the suffering poor, the most of them would not touch it, with so much as the

little finger. When we meet an exception to these remarks, we honour him with our highest respect.

CHARITY RECONCILED WITH DENOMINATIONALISM AND THE STABILITY OF SOCIETY—THE FALLACY IN OUR SYSTEM OF CHARITY.

But it is proper now to make the transition to more positive views of our general subject. The author of New Themes was much complained of because his book contained so much that was *destructive* and so little that was *constructive;* and we think it likely the same complaint may be made against this humble tract. But the design—and almost the sole design—of New Themes, was to point out an evil, of whose existence the Christian world was almost unconscious. A great work is done when a disease, secretly consuming the vitals, is discovered, even though no remedy be prescribed. But "New Themes" indicates the remedy as clearly as

he does the disease; the only deficiency was the want of suggestions as to *the mode* of applying the remedy, and *that* point he propounds as one for earnest and immediate study. The proper and intended effect of the book would have been to set the clergy especially to studying the great theme of Charity in all its parts. The very reference of this subject to the clergy was an indirect compliment to their ability, influence, and general Christian spirit. And although, like the bear brushing the fly from the nose of his mistress, the author laid his hand rather heavy upon the clerical countenance, yet at heart he evidently had great affection and respect for "the Protestant clergy." It is evident, from the testimonies the publisher has appended to the author's second publication, that by no means *all* of the clergy or laity interpreted "New Themes" as, perhaps, the majority did. Many had the penetration to see that here was a noble Christian mind wrestling with a grand theme, and looking

anxiously to the clergy for help: and they had the magnanimity to overlook the honest impatience of the author, and to submit as meekly to the lash, which they at least partly deserved, as did their lamb-like Saviour to the lash, which he did not deserve at all. For our part, we believe that this subject must receive its full development from the combined studies of clergy and laity. Those parts of it which run into legislation and political economy had best be left principally to the laity to evolve the principles, which the clergy may, when settled, accept and make use of. But still the chief and central part of the study lies in the domain of clerical investigation. The whole subject *heads* in the Bible, and must thence be developed and applied. The metaphysician has indeed an interesting department of the work. But to him whose profession calls him to a minute and constant study of the Bible, and to a demonstration of all the principles, applications, and ten-

dencies of Christianity, is this subject chiefly committed by the very appointment of Christ. And it is treason to Christ to thrust the subject aside. The whole aspect of Christendom would be ameliorated in less than a generation were the clergy to bring their mighty resources to bear upon this neglected, forgotten theme. Two great reasons will, for a time, render the clergy shy of the subject. The one is, the fear that it would tend to loosen denominational attachments; the other, that it would jeopard the security of property. But a little consideration will show them that such fears are wholly imaginary. Charity, as applied to interdenominational differences, does not imply a yielding of any principle or attachment, but simply a love in spite of differences, and a readiness to co-operate in all great enterprises which really demand united action. This does not imply the yielding of any feature in the peculiar denominational policy of any of

the sects. Such a charity as that would be a vice.

Nor do the demands of charity at all unsettle any of the foundations of society. The rights of property would really be established the more firmly by the prevalence of a proper spirit toward the needy. The rights of property are never so insecure as when there are large masses of neglected and dissatisfied men, who have everything to gain, and nothing to lose, by an unhingement of society. It is astonishing that the wealthy classes do not perceive the growing discontent of the moneyless millions, and the impossibility of restraining them by violence. The perils lie in leaving things to work on as they are now going; the real hope of security lies in pursuing a course of justice and kindness to those who naturally feel themselves to be oppressed, and who will not bear a long-protracted exasperation. "Socialism" has gotten to be one of the hobgoblin terms to frighten grown-up children with, as if

Christianity does not teach socialism from beginning to end. Socialism has no essential connexion with any anti-christian idea whatsoever; it does *not* mean, "turn mankind into one great *pen*." We have permitted a set of Christ-hating philanthropists to filch and appropriate our great Christian idea, and because they contort it, we have been denying Christ, just as we did about the "Higher Law." We have no sympathy with that riff-raff horde of Abolition and Fourierite fanatics; but in the name of all honesty and piety, don't let us disown great Christian ideas because fools and knaves turn them into their shuttlecocks.

If "*Love thy neighbour as thyself*" is not socialism, we have no conception what the real meaning of the term is. Face the text, reader, like a man, and accept its teaching! Was not Bishop Butler right in his exposition of that text? If he was wrong, why has he never been answered? Why is he taught in your colleges? Now, Bishop But-

ler's sermons are the strongest socialism we have ever seen out of the New Testament. But do not be alarmed. We are not for a "re-divide," although we should make smartly by it. We think that such a proceeding would be the utmost unkindness of the rich to the poor. The first kindness a man can do to his neighbour is to keep himself and family from being a tax to that neighbour; and the second is, to make that neighbour do as he is doing, viz., support himself. But it also teaches, that when there is real want, which can be relieved in no other way, he is to part with all his surplus estate beyond "a competency." There is no stopping short of this interpretation of the words, "Love thy neighbour AS thyself."

Were, however, the proper, wise, and broad system pursued, want might be banished from society without at all affecting the comfort of the wealthy. The mere *parings* of their *luxuries* would be sufficient. It is possible that even now, in this coun-

try the actual expenditure of private and public benefactions would go very far to secure universal relief were the right system pursued. What we complain of in clergy and people as to this point, is not that they do nothing for the poor, but that the whole subject is treated in a loose and perfunctory manner, that the things done are rather the irrepressible outgoings of the heart *in spite* of the grand deficiencies in our Christian systems, that they are not the outpourings of our Christianity *as such*, are not the fruit of Christian ideas and principles inculcated in pulpit, creed, Christian literature, or ecclesiastical enactments, but are the unconscious, unguided, independent volunteer instincts of benevolent and generally Christian natures, who are charitable to the poor not because they are taught to be so, but because they cannot help it; and we fearlessly assert that so far as churches are doing anything in this behalf, it is not by exciting and guiding the feelings of the people, but in

the way of *being led on* by the spontaneous feelings of their people. On this whole subject the Church is *following* and not *leading* the people. Examine all the eleemosynary operations of our city philanthropists, and it will be seen that they are not the carrying out of any single principle insisted on in our ecclesiastical teachings.

Let our meaning be thus illustrated. We have before us the Annual Reports of a large number of relief societies, whose operations are plied with truly commendable zeal in different cities of our country. As perhaps one of the very best of these societies we select, "The ninth Annual Report of the New York Association for improving the condition of the poor, for the year 1852, with the by-laws and list of members. Organized 1843. Incorporated 1848." Here we are enabled to view the operations of a powerful, truly wise, efficient, and philanthropic association. But for its work of charity, *who receives the glory?* God, or man; Christianity

or the world? Is it done in the name of Christ, or of mere human kindness? Christian people are among the doers, and Christian impulses are moving them, but is there anything in their constitution or mode of visitation and distribution, to inform the poor, and to keep it before their minds, that Christ is still on the earth instrumentally, "going about doing good!" When the Apostles performed their acts of mercy, it was "in the name of Jesus of Nazareth," and when, at Lystra, the people were about to honour them as gods, Paul with horror refused the honour, and demanded that they should give the glory to God. But these humane societies, whilst indeed there are occasional references to Scripture, still act in their own name; the poor are not taught that the "cup of cold water" is given in the name of Christ; hence their homage of gratitude and honour terminates on the immediate donors, instead of being given to God! For the same spirit, Herod was

eaten of worms! Surely the Christian should always remember that "he is not his own, but has been bought with a price, wherefore he should *glorify God* in his body and spirit, which are his." "That he is dead, and his life is hid with Christ in God." "That it is no longer he which lives, but Christ which liveth in him." And that "Christ should be all *and in all*."

The Church is Christ's abiding representative on earth. It is *his body!* and is animated by *his Spirit!* And hence the Church is bound "*to walk as he walked*," "*to follow Him*." She should, as far as possible, do for mankind what Christ did, and do it as Christ's representative. Such should be her lineaments, mien, and movements, that the world would "take knowledge of her that she has been with Jesus." Does she now present the combined aspect of the Divine-human; of the God-man? Or whilst exclusively reproducing the lineaments divine, is not her aspect deformed, for the want

of the lineaments human? Whatever Christian people may have privately done, has not the Church quietly handed over the whole philanthropic department of Christianity to the world? If (as will be admitted) beneficence not merely to the poor of the Church, but to every suffering neighbour, is a Christian duty, where are the Church's expositions of the principles? The Church is not backward in expressing her mind as to the countless "commandeth's and forbiddeth's" of Scripture; where are her utterances which have ever impelled a single scheme of general pauper relief? Let us be informed!

HINTS AS TO WHAT SHOULD BE DONE!

Then we would as a distinct proposition urge the attention of our ecclesiastical bodies to this whole subject. They are free to pass resolutions about Temperance, Missions, Colonization, and such like causes, why may not resolutions be introduced and

passed recommending Charity to the poor and needy generally, as Christian duty; or at least committees be appointed to investigate and report on the subject. The true, Scriptural principles might thus gradually be gotten at and embodied among the authoritative acts and beliefs of the Church, and would be incorporated among all its official teachings. So that in time, the subject would receive due attention in Theological Seminaries, Boards of Publication, Reviews, newspapers, besides the pulpit and ecclesiastical proceedings; and then it becomes a part of the organic creed and life of the Church.

When we recommend that the Church study out and enunciate and inculcate the true Christian principles upon this subject, we do not advise that she bring herself only corporately in contact with the poor, or that she establish a system of agency, by means of which the people may discharge their obligations to the poor entirely through the

intervention of church officers. Officers indeed must be made use of: but there is no more reason why the almsgiving of Christians should be done by proxy, than their praying or their church-going. "A Layman" puts on a wise air when he talks about most men being too busy with their own affairs to be looking personally after the condition of the poor. The very same reason has sent many a poor soul to perdition! It was just such excuses that our Saviour anticipated. One must attend to his land, and another to his oxen, and another to his newly married wife, and they all pray to be excused! The truth is, that with a proper system, the personal attentions required of each individual would amount to far less than the other ordinary duties of the Christian life. Perhaps in a large city, a single visit in a week or even less to an abode of suffering, would be all that would be required of any one of those who would be able and willing

to afford succour. The people have time enough to go to houses of feasting; why might they not divide this, and take part for visiting houses of suffering? But the common way is to send an agent to the house of suffering, whilst we go ourselves to the house of feasting. There are certainly some works of Christian enterprise which must be done by proxy, such as preaching the Gospel in distant places, and others which might be mentioned; but when the work to be done lies right on our daily track, there is no reason why all in ordinary circumstances should not take some personal part in ameliorating the state of the needy classes, but there is every reason why they should.

We do not mean to affirm that every individual Christian is bound to enter, habitually, some house or houses of poverty. Ill-health, unusual distance, or some other like causes, may be a valid reason for omitting the duty, just as for omitting other duties, such as attending church. But "as far as

in them lies," all should, *in some way*, be engaged directly in this work. How far the great object may be divided into different departments, and those labouring in one be excused from labouring in the others, we need not now stop to consider. Such views are secondary, and may be matured, when the primary principle has given its legitimate impulse to Christian activity. However the statement may need to be modified, the principle is to our mind clear, that Christian beneficence to the poor neighbour should be bestowed *personally* and *individually*.

In the first place, it is a work requiring great tenderness and sympathy, and agents, who do their work for a price rather than for love, should not be trusted to execute the wishes of donors. The keepers of poor-houses (like undertakers), fall into a business, unfeeling way of doing their duties; which is wounding and often partial and cruel to the objects of their attention.

But the principal argument for personal

attentions to the poor, lies in the advantage it is to the giver's own character. It is a good rule to bring the donor as near as possible to the object of his benefaction. A mere appeal from the pulpit or platform cannot develope the charitable feelings, like an actual sight of the misery, and a direct effort at relief.

And in the actual execution of the work of personal benevolence, every valuable quality of Christian character is strengthened. It is a self-denying work. To cast a contribution into the box brought to the hand, or to attend committees and anniversaries, are very trifling exercises of Christian self-denial and devotion, compared with what is demanded in the weary perambulations through the street, the contact with filth, and often with rude and repulsive people, the facing of disease, and distress, and all manner of heart-rending and heart-frightening scenes, and all the trials of faith, patience, and hope, which are incident to the

duty we urge. Such exercises are as essential to the development of Christian character, as the strivings of the gymnasium were to the development of the gladiator's muscle. "Deny thyself and take thy cross," are the Redeemer's great command: and, unless followed, spiritual effeminacy must result. A wise discretion, too, is continually appealed to in exercising that discrimination which is absolutely and incessantly needed in applying charity. And the very difficulties attending the duty will drive the Christian to a Higher Power, for wisdom and grace. In such circumstances, however, religion affords to its possessor its choicest pleasures. "Christ, who is our life," then invigorates, and elevates, and charms the soul with a sense of his peculiar presence. All the promises of increase, of blessedness, of fatness made to the liberal giver, are made good to his soul. A calm resting on God, a sense of gratitude for his own blessings, a sweet consciousness of "doing good," like Christ, many

a blessing from the succoured, a rich opening of the fountains of love in the heart, a fresh zest in the duties of religion, a higher appreciation of the beneficence of Christianity in thus visiting wicked man, and wiping away his every tear, and pointing him to a common Saviour, and to a heritage of eternal riches beyond this suffering life—a heritage as free to the poor as to the rich: such are the present rewards of an imitation of Christ. Here, indeed, lies one of the most potent of all the means of sanctification.

Because, however, we advocate personal application of one's own benefactions, we do not advocate a loose and indiscriminate method of doing it. There must be a dividing up of the field of effort, and a thorough exploration of every part, and the assigning of each case of want to one or more families, who will have the case constantly under their supervision. But these charitable efforts, as before intimated, should comprise far more than the mere supplying of present

want. They should be addressed to providing roomy dwellings, finding employment for all able to work, providing nurses and medical attendants, to reforming the vicious, educating the young, instructing all in the duties of morals and religion; exhorting and praying with families, giving Bibles and other suitable books to such as can read; gathering several families together for worship and instruction, providing plain houses of worship in their neighbourhood—in short, simultaneously carrying on every department of effort for the general elevation of each district, and doing this not in a fitful and disjointed way, but in a systematic manner, and by keeping the pressure on all the time, abandoning no willing subject as hopeless.

To accomplish this thoroughly, there must, of course, be officers, teachers, missionaries employed to live in the very midst of the wretchedness, and to supervise and direct all the efforts of the people. And it

is just here that the Church ought to connect herself directly to the enterprise. The leading officers should be appointed by the Church, and to the Church should answer, and report: but mark you! these officers are not to stand between the giver and receiver, but to bring *giver and receiver together*. While they work themselves, they are to be the marshals directing the individual labours of the people, so that there may be no neglect or misappropriation. Under such a system, if properly organized, poor-houses, asylums, and such like institutions, would scarcely be needed, and had better in the main be dispensed with: for, if the poor are taken care of at their homes, why need *they* be sent to hospitals any more than the rich! Street-begging would cease, and pauperism constantly diminish. Infectious diseases would be checked, and public order and safety promoted, and taxation greatly reduced: whilst such a spirit would be fostered in the com-

munity as would promote every desirable interest.

The assertion that such attentions to the poor would tend to annihilate effort among them to do for themselves, would apply with equal force to all relief of indigence; and if it be valid, then all such relief should be discontinued. We contend that every consideration in favour of charity at all, applies *a fortiori* to this scheme of systematized personal inspection. In the first place, it tends to keep families together, and thus to leave every sufferer in the midst of all the associations of family and friends, which will of itself bring to his aid all those countless assiduities of friendship, which, though costing little, are worth a great deal. In the next place, no plan could more thoroughly lay the whole case of a family bare for inspection than this; and not in a rude and official way, but by the queries and observations of sympathizing friends. The poor man would have as little opportunity for relaxing his

exertions to provide the best he can for his family, as he possibly can have under any system, and far less than under the ordinary hasty investigations of occasional visiters. And he will be far less disposed to impose upon the voluntary and standing friend of his family than upon the salaried officer or mere casual caller at his door. When there are large funds provided — and especially when provided by state taxation, and disbursed by state officers—the effect in fostering idleness and improvidence among the poor is all that it has ever been represented to be. The working of the Poor Law System in England confirms this in a remarkable manner. But where people are left midst all the stimuli of home influence, and their real condition fully ascertained by a constant observation by the same persons, and they placed in a system of *training* rather than of simple relief, it is impossible for them to deceive, or for the unworthy to receive more than their deservings. And, moreover, this

system would constantly *diminish* the evil, whilst the ordinary loose way of indiscriminate giving on the one hand, and of rude, official disbursing on the other, only multiplies subjects for relief in a rapid ratio, and enhances all the evils of pauperism.

Whilst we are not disposed to speak harshly of those who have founded these countless eleemosynary institutions in our country, for various classes of suffering people, we doubt the principle on which they are all founded. We do not see why women could not "lie-in" better at home than in an hospital, and why young women could not be reformed at home better than in Magdalen Asylums. We fear that the putting of bad women to associating with one another, and withdrawing them from general society, does not promise much for their growth in purity. But we do not lay particular stress upon this point.

No doubt many persons will hastily dismiss this general plan of operations, because

of certain obvious difficulties in every community, arising from the multiplicity of denominations overlapping one another, and the numerous societies already at work in the field. But these apparent obstacles rapidly diminish, if they do not entirely vanish, when the mind is brought seriously to the task of removing them. Of course, the work would be much simpler if there were but one denomination, or if the different denominations were locally divided into wards or districts. But, taking a larger view of charity, we see advantages in this very interworking of denominations on the same ground. Christian people are brought into a contact calculated to promote the best feelings among one another. And, in truth, there is not much more difficulty in carrying out a *personal* than a *local* jurisdiction. Where one denomination finds a needy family provided for by the members of another denomination, there is no more danger of unpleasant collision than there now is in

pastoral visitation. There is an etiquette growing out of Christian love, which will dispose the labourers harmoniously in their appropriate spheres. Each denomination, and each individual church, would have its circle of families, which, by all others, would be given up to their exclusive attention.

The same course of remark applies to the general voluntary associations. Whatever they do for the families under the care of any church may easily be known by that sort of constant intercourse which would be kept up among the parties concerned, and be subtracted from what is done by the church. Were such a scheme to be generally adopted by the churches, the present system of relief would be entirely superseded. All the benevolent individuals of a community would act with the churches, whether church-members or not; and then there would be abundant resources for covering the whole ground and accomplishing all that would be needed. Indeed, the work could be done well, though

many churches should fail to enter into the scheme. But were the point clearly apprehended, no church having any evangelic zeal could decline its aid.

INTEMPERANCE MISMANAGED.

There are many things very shallow in "Layman's" "Review," but nothing more so than the use he makes of sundry temperance statistics. He states the vast amount of money expended in Great Britain and the United States for intoxicating drinks, and very complacently lays over the most of it to the account of the poor—forgetting that a Lord Bishop consumes ten times (in value) the amount that a poor labourer does, or that the cost of liquors at one dinner of a Walnut Street or Fifth Avenue Christian would enable a poor man to keep himself drunk for a twelvemonth. We are fully satisfied that far more dissipation exists in the higher than in the lower classes of society. A

mustached young buck will often swallow more strong drink than an Irish drayman.

But suppose the poor *do* drink large quantities of liquor, shall they for that cause go off the list of our charitable endeavours? Do they then cease to be *our neighbours?* You might just as well cast them off for any other vice. The wives and children of the drunkard are certainly not to be left to misery and starvation, and all the worst features of poverty be left to reproduce themselves indefinitely, because the head of the family turns himself into a brute. And does not the case of the poor drunkard himself make a special appeal, from the very fact that he *is* the slave of vice as well as of poverty—an appeal not so much to the pocket as to the earnest moral efforts of the virtuous—for his radical reform? We despise such flippant, self-complacent apologies as this, for snubbing the appeals of erring humanity. The mere fact of a poor man drinking beer or whiskey is no more against him than the

rich man's drinking of wine or brandy is against him. And when we consider his education, his troubles, and evil associations, we can scarcely wonder that his tippling should end in drunkenness; and this pharisaical tone of contempt toward him is the very way to goad him to a moral recklessness, which must end in the destruction of all his hopes for both worlds.

We are persuaded that this is not the spirit of Christianity, nor is it the way to diminish the evil which thus excommunicates the victim from the pale of the human brotherhood. Were Christ now on earth, and were a party of our modern Pharisees to drag up some drunken pauper to be condemned by him, he would say to his accusers, "Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone;" and when he found the drunkard alone, he would go kindly to him and tell him, as he did the adulterous woman, to "go and sin no more."

The text from Paul's Epistle to the Co-

rinthians, "If a man will not work, neither shall he eat," is often quoted to prove that those who persist in idleness, whether from intemperance or mere indolence, should be entirely forsaken. We cannot believe that such was the intent of the Apostle. He was not referring to paupers in the community at large, but to certain idle busybodies *in the Church* of Corinth, who went about quartering themselves on their fellow-professors. To this class Paul meant to administer a stern rebuke, and in so doing, enunciated a principle undoubtedly correct, and to be followed as a rule. But we think he meant to express the *ill-deserving* of the idle rather than the duty of withholding food from him. If a man will not work when he is able, he does not *deserve* to have food. Every reader of the Bible, and indeed of any book, is aware that many an unqualified declaration is to be taken with certain implied modifications. For example, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Here is asserted, without qualification,

an inviolable connexion between sin and death, and yet the Gospel informs us of another principle, whereby the soul that sinneth may live. The laws of human brotherhood, and the spirit of Christianity as exhibited in the New Testament, seem to forbid the idea that any man should be given over by his fellow-men to hopeless starvation and moral obduracy. To turn the back upon the drunkard because he is not easily reformed, or to give over to neglect *any* man, whatever be the depth of his depravity, is not only to consign him practically to perdition, but it is to admit a want of faith in the all-sufficiency of Christian influences. It is to say that charity *may fail;* that here are devils which even Christ cannot expel. But what right have *we* to set bounds to the instrumental power of Christian influences? Are we not bound to keep the wretch alive, if it be for no other reason than to respite him thus long from hell? And should we not continue to ply him with the tenderest ministrations of

Christianity, and to follow him to the darkest haunts of his debauchery, and above the din of the midnight revelry cry, "Behold the Lamb of God—*behold*—BEHOLD!" and never resign the hope that God may bless our attentions to the miserable creature as long as he is this side of eternity?

It is to be feared that the true mode of dealing with the whole subject of intemperance is yet to be discovered. The gigantic efforts of temperance advocates have not produced, and are not likely to produce, results at all proportioned to this vast expenditure. Such efforts are like pumping a leaky vessel. An impression is produced for the time, but the moment the efforts cease, things begin to return to their former swamped condition, unless some real diversion of the current is accomplished. Prohibitory legislation will be only a temporary barrier to the tide which presently will rise over it and sweep it off as the swelling river does the levee which lines its shores. This

whole principle which depends upon prohibitory legislation to reform evils which grow directly out of the depraved heart of man, is fatally wrong. Law is valuable *in reforming the offender*, only so far as it for a time holds him in check whilst positive measures are resorted to which change his nature, or at least divert his tastes into better channels. Merely to snatch the bottle out of the drunkard's hand does not of itself tend to make a better man of him. It exasperates him, drives him to stealthy and mean ways of still gratifying his passion, or else causes a diversion of the tide of lust into worse avenues of crime. Especially will this be the case with those laws which practically make a distinction between rich and poor. The anti-liquor law lays but a slight check on the self-indulgence of the rich, whilst the poor must either leave off the habit, or (as will more likely be the case) debase himself yet more to secure what he craves. Let us not be understood as opposing prohibitory legisla-

tion upon this and other evils. But we wish to see laws which will bear equally; and more than this, we wish to see corresponding and even more prompt and vigorous efforts addressing themselves to the *radical* reform of the class of drinkers. Much of the drinking among the lower classes, results from the paucity of their resources for enjoyment. The wealthier and more intelligent classes of the community have many modes of diversion for their leisure hours which the poor do not enjoy. Riding, strolling through the day, travelling, visiting, examining new and strange sights, reading, listening to lectures, music, painting, attending concerts, family games, luxuries of the table, and the whole range of innocent amusements—these in a great measure are denied to the poor by the force of circumstances; and in the place of them he finds within his reach, and the range of his intelligence and taste, diversions which are in the main debasing. Having to

labour all day, his spare time lies in the night and in the Sabbath. The places most accessible to him are the theatre, the circus, the cock-pit, the dog-ring, the bowling-alley, the gaming-house, the fire-company, the society of the cast-off and diseased "strange women," and the ubiquitous grog-shop. And when Sunday comes, he must lie in stupor, to recover his exhausted strength, or he must embrace this, his only opportunity, of making visits and excursions. Unless a healthful moral influence has pervaded his home and his heart, he feels no attraction sufficient to retain him in the family circle, in spite of the seductive influences without. And usually the mischief is done ere the poor man has become the head of a family. From his earliest youth he had been familiar with vice in every form, and as he grew up, his associations only hardened him in evil.

But there are many young men, of even pious parents, who, scarcely knowing how

else to spend their evenings, drop into the tavern, where are always to be found a good fire, the newspapers of the day, an opportunity to smoke, a squad of jovial companions with whom they can talk over the news and indulge in a merry laugh, to pay for which, they feel bound to get something at the bar. And thus commences a life of dissipation. But the mere robbing them of the comforts of an evening smoke and chat at the bar-room fire, will not reform them, nor save others from ruin in a different form. Other places of temptation will multiply, and perhaps the last state of the youth will be worse than the first.

RADICAL CHANGE IN THE HABITS AND TREATMENT OF THE POOR.

The design of these remarks is to signify that the philanthropist should make it a subject of special study to determine how the poor may be provided with an innocent,

improving, and interesting mode of spending their leisure hours. Of course as Christianity is made to pervade the lower stratum of society, home will become more attractive to the poor man, and his thoughts will easily and improvingly find employment in the themes and duties of morality and religion. But we hope that some means of immediate application may be fallen upon which will prove auxiliary to the higher end. We have nothing of striking character to propose. How far night schools, kept up by the influence of the special missionary visitation, free reading and conversation rooms, lyceums, free musical entertainments, lectures of a practical character on common things open to all, free exhibitions of curious and interesting objects and experiments, street lecturing and preaching, might be advantageously employed, we do not venture an opinion. Nothing, however, seems to us to promise so much in improving the ordinary habits of the poor (next to a change of heart) as

the promotion of *social intercourse among families.* Whatever contributes to develope the social affections improves the character, sobers and refines the taste, imparts a fondness for those enjoyments which after all are unequalled among the things of earth in imparting true, soul-satisfying comfort. God has wisely and kindly ordained it, that man should find his most precious sources of enjoyment nearest to him. Were the heart only trained aright, a man would never take to the street or the crowded assembly from a mere dissatisfied craving. And when drawn out by circumstances, his heart would still gravitate homeward, and when there, repose in sweet equilibrium. In the promotion of such a state of things, it may not be best to begin at the very core of the object. Much more might be done, by promoting a general neighbourhood sociality, than by applying the efforts directly to promote family affection. It is often the case that family affection lies almost dormant

until a tapping of the heart from without causes a reaction inward. Awaken in the breast of man a pure love for *any* object, and you send a softening and sweetening influence through *all* his relations.

Now in this general work of promoting a love for quiet, social enjoyments, the higher classes have an unlimited power in their hands. If, instead of ever seeking higher and higher associations, they would in part in social matters, "condescend to men of low estate," as did their Pattern, they might exert a vast and most elevating influence. When they make a feast, let them not always bid the rich and great, but let them go out sometimes and bring in the people of the highways and hedges. We are fully aware of the difficulty of inducing the people even of republican lands to overstep the defined barriers of caste; but we are sure that it must be done far more than it is, before a Christian spirit is exemplified in the world, and before Christianity can

fulfil her mission. "The rich and poor must *meet together*, for the Lord is Maker of them all,"—they must meet *socially*, as well as at church. It is admitted that coarseness is not agreeable to a refined mind; but not insisting on the fact that wealth is no fit meter of refinement, we maintain the duty of *submitting* to such uncongenialities, for the sake of improving the character and happiness of your less cultivated neighbour. If you possess superior social cultivation, a true Charity requires that you shall communicate of it to him who has less. Christian people are far too solicitous about their social standing, are far too sensitive about being thought to have vulgar associations. Were Christ to appear this day upon earth, and move among the same sort of people he associated generally with when here, many of his professed followers would feel greatly scandalized, and would scarcely feel like inviting him into their houses, with his gang of shabby dis-

ciples. The Church has much yet to learn of the significancy there was in Jesus Christ selecting the poor and despised for his intimate associates. We know of no way of expressing our idea on this point so clearly as by saying, that socially Christians must come to an "*about face!*" Instead of looking to those above them, in order that they may be lifted onward and upward, they must look backward upon those below them to see how they can help them upward and onward. He that finds in himself a disposition to be greatest, should at once become the servant of all. "Be not high-minded, but condescend to men of low estate," has in it a world of rebuke to modern Christians, and a world of regenerating power if attended to.

The great social want is the cement of love applied to the crevices in the framework of society—some of which even now are yawning and portentous. The scale of gradation is too long, and its degrees too irregular. But one of the least considered, yet

most important, of all questions, is what should be the reciprocal bearing of those two distant grades of capitalist and labourer, when brought together, in the relation of employer and employee, of master and servant, or of manufacturer and "hand," and all those cases in which labour is controlled by money. We refer not merely to the matter of wages —although a very important subject—but to the tone of intercourse between them; especially the duties incumbent on the employer. We need popular instruction upon this very point. Nearly one-half of society is placed *anent* the other half in this relation. It is seen in almost every family, every store, every shop, every factory, every farm. But how loose and undefined are our common ideas upon this subject, and hence, how irregular and defective are the reciprocal duties of the parties. How few employers are even kind and just. How *very* few admit that they are under any farther obligations to their labourers than to fulfil the pecuniary contract

between them. The higher obligations involved in the relation, are not understood or studied. But certainly such influence as the employer has over his labourers, ought to be made the means of moral good to the latter. The household should be a school of improvement to the servants. The manufactory should be pervaded by an invigorating process of intellectual and moral improvement; and if a system of direct religious teaching and worship be practicable, so much the better. But a humane head to such an establishment has a powerful lever for lifting the entire mass of his labourers and their families. Christ's presence should be felt and acknowledged everywhere. If we are not prepared with detailed suggestions upon this important class of topics, it is because the whole field is yet unexplored; and the fact that we cannot do it, only demonstrates the necessity for others to take up the subject.

Before leaving the "New Themes," we simply advert to the fact, that we have seen

no attempted reply to the author's argument from the practice of the early Church. We shall not reiterate what he says upon the subject, but it is our impression that he has stated the facts of history truly: and how their force is evaded we cannot conceive, except in the supposition, of a determination not to be convinced, or even moved to inquiry.

INDIRECT MEANS.—A LITERATURE FOR THE POOR.

Let it not be supposed that our duty to the poor is finished when we have given our direct efforts for the amelioration of their condition. In many more general and *indirect* ways may their welfare be promoted. Their cause must be studied and pleaded before the world, their rights as men must be secured to them, the causes of poverty must be studied and removed, as far as possible, and their interests be allowed an equal share in legislation with those of the rich.

Perhaps one of the first efforts, of a general character, which should be attended to, is the providing of a *suitable literature for the poor*. Let any one consider the matter, and he will see, that whilst there are books in abundance calculated for parents, children, for philosophers, politicians, Christians, sinners, infidels, for people of taste and imagination, for critics and scholars,—there are almost none, in our country, at least, written with an eye to a special adaptation to the wants, trials, comforts, and general peculiarities of those in the poorer classes of society; and no efforts made to secure and circulate such works. This is really as distinct and peculiar a class as any. It is easy to see that most books contemplate men in some particular aspect; and in the selection and treatment of his subject, the author is seeking to adapt himself to the mind and views and circumstances of those for whom he is writing. Many books are written which the poor may read with interest, but it is be-

cause of their feeling some want met, which they have in common with other classes of society—not because it meets their case as poor people. It is easy to imagine how they would be repelled by books written in bad taste, though meant for them. But the success of such books as "The American Mechanic," by Dr. James W. Alexander, indicates the demand for such books, and the possibility of making them as popular as they are appropriate.

It is easy to understand *why* there are not more such books. There is much more *eclat* and much more profit, of a mercenary kind, in writing for the rich. It requires self-denial to write for the poor, just as it does to visit the poor, and preach the Gospel to them. And generally, in the world, they have been considered as a sort of dead incumbrance on society, which was to be tolerated only, and made to keep out of the way as much as possible. Not only should a literature for the poor be written,

but means should be taken to promote its circulation among those for whom it is designed. The poor have not the opportunity of studying catalogues, and perambulating among book-stores, nor have they usually much avidity for reading; but were their attention called to a literature which came home to their daily experience, they would soon resort to books as a solace and an amusement. The poor who have some taste for reading, frequently find their zeal chilled by the very difficulty of finding suitable books, and the liability, almost certainty, of getting unsuitable books. In a visit we once paid to the house of a worthy drayman, we found a copy of Hugh Miller's "Footprints of the Creator"—which he said he had purchased because he liked the title, but which he soon found was no book for him; and there his dollar lay a dead loss. On the other hand, we once were conversing with an humble Irishman, who had a number of books in his dwelling, but seemed to

have been satisfied with but one (besides his cherished Bible). That one he had read over and over, and always with tears. It contained the narrative of a poor boy, who had set out early to seek an independent livelihood, and whose struggles are all related—and said he, with a voice tremulous with emotion, "Although I am now the father of grown children, and am in better circumstances, yet that poor boy's struggles were so much like my own early history, that I am carried back to my youth, and weep over all that boy's sorrows more than I ever did over my own." The title of the book, we think, was, "The Young Man away from Home." It spoke to the poor man's experience; and such is the kind of writings we want written, selected out, and systematically circulated, among the class for whom they are designed. And we know not why there might not be a *periodical literature* of the same class—studiously adapted to the poor. Associations, free congregational libra-

ries, colporteurs, could easily accomplish their circulation.

ANOTHER TRIUMPH OF CHRISTIANITY.

In our author's second publication, entitled, "Politics for American Christians," he presents us with some profound and original views upon a number of indirect means of ameliorating the condition of the lower classes. He is a man, as is easily seen, thoroughly conversant with the whole ground of Political Economy; and there is something sublime and inspiring in the sight of such a scholar and thinker finding himself baffled in every other direction, and at last finding the only possible solution to the great agonizing questions of national interest, in the application of the principles of the Bible, and bringing his whole science, and all his accumulations of thought, and all the precious interests they involve, and casting them down at the foot of the cross!

Attend to his language.

"We believe that *the whole problem of human destiny in this world* is fully committed to the consideration of Christians. Believing, as we do, that the light of Christianity must shine *upon every investigation* intended to explore the hidden path to human happiness, we think that such explorations *can only be successful in the hands of Christians*," (p. 10.) This appears to us like the heralding of a new triumph of Christianity! Heretofore, if Political Economy has not been anti-christian, it has at least been unchristian. It set up to solve its own questions without help; but it has struggled long and inefficiently, and now, like many other unchristian and anti-christian sciences, it has at last been "shut up to the faith." What a standing miracle is the Bible!

We do not forget that men often profess much reverence for Christianity, whose views of the system really would render Christianity a nullity. But the author of New Themes

is not one of these. He not only receives Christianity as a revelation from God, but receives the orthodox interpretations of it, and proposes no changes which will disturb any feature in what is called evangelic orthodoxy. Attend again to his language; and it is presumed that no one who has read his writings will feel a doubt of his sincerity:

"It may cost many years of effort and inquiry to occupy a position which will afford a full view of the subject (viz., Christianity in its human relations), the complications of which are enough to deter any but the most resolute. It cannot be done without severe mental discipline and painful struggles, for many things have to be unlearned. But it costs no sacrifice of orthodoxy. On the contrary, it would vindicate orthodoxy from much for which it should never have been responsible; it will afford a clearer view of the elementary doctrines of Christianity than can be had in any other way. This view must be attained with one hand toward Di-

vinity, the other toward Humanity, an open Bible before the eyes, a heart raised to God for the enlightening influences of His Holy Spirit, and with a devout looking, not only to Christ our atoning Saviour, but to Christ our Lawgiver, our Teacher, our Great Exemplar—not less to be *heeded* and *obeyed* than to be accepted and worshipped. This method of inquiry will exalt Christianity above all former estimation, by exhibiting its fitness and applicability, not only to save men in eternity, but to save them from a vast sum of misery, wickedness, and oppression, in this world; thus increasing their grounds for gratitude to God, and leaving them time and opportunity to prepare for Heaven."

Without pretending to coincide with the author in every sentiment which he has written, we yet express our deep conviction when we say that the evangelic portion of Christendom have great reason to thank Providence that this whole subject has been committed, not only to such able, but to such

safe and friendly hands as the author of New Themes. Carlyle, Schelling, Parker, Emerson, Greely, writers in the Westminster Review, and such like, write on the same "themes;" but the improvements they propose involve not only the razing to the earth of the old structure of orthodox theology, but the improvement of *Christianity itself*—which, of course, would end in the entire abnegation of all revelation. And many of their ideas are so sympathizing toward suffering humanity, that the only way for orthodoxy to maintain its hold upon the popular mind, is for some Moses to smite the rock, and cause the waters of love to flow out to the famishing people. We trust that such a prophet will ere long be raised up.

To prevent misapprehension, it may as well be said here, that the present writer does not pretend to be the peculiar exponent of the views of the author of New Themes, who was never known to the writer, even by

report, until the appearance of the aforesaid book.

UNION, BUT NOT COMPROMISE.

As the author acknowledges, many of the questions which he propounds are as yet unsolved, because they have not received earnest attention in the right quarters; and to him who approaches them for the first time, they seem entangled with a multitude of perplexities. Perhaps one of the most delicate and difficult of all is, how Christians may most efficiently act together, whilst yet maintaining a due loyalty to their respective denominations.

This is not a new question, viewed separately. There have always been men, and bodies of men, among our Protestant denominations, who lamented the divided aspect of Protestant Christendom, and who proposed and attempted to carry out various schemes for securing united action on such platforms

as the mass of them could agree to stand together upon. This proceeded upon the eclectic system of picking out articles of belief which all would subscribe, and incorporating them into a narrow creed, around which they gathered a sort of liberal, independent church. Gradually it was found, first, that the people were gathering around the new eclectic, or perhaps we should say catholic, church, and losing their attachment to the peculiarities of their own denominational beliefs. If their pastors and leading laymen could agree to carry on the whole work of spreading the Gospel in all its parts on the basis of a creed an inch long, they could not see why the same inch-long creed would not do for the Gospel at home; and so they were fast getting up a sort of contempt for their peculiar denominational ideas, until ere long they would have been willing to knock down all line-fences, and form one very big Church with one very little creed. And the next step in their progress would

have been to wonder why Paul discussed such useless doctrines as election, and why there was any room left to doubt about the mode of baptism and parity of the ministry—from which wonderings the transition would be easy to a dispensing with all such unnecessary doctrines and practices, and finally, going past Quakerism, they would find themselves shaking hands with the said Parker, Carlyle, Westminster Review & Co.

As we set out for a plain talk, we take leave to say that we are not one of the advocates of a charity which goes for compromise of principle in anything, least of all in the direct work of spreading the Gospel of eternal life. We dare not go to practising homœopathy on men's souls, although we have considerable respect for the system in its proper relations. The Bible contains our materia medica and our pharmacopœia, and we advocate a strict following of directions; one of which requires a declaration of the whole counsel of God.

And reserving the privilege of modifying our views when cause is seen to do so, we venture the opinion that the union of Christian denominations had better be *informal* than organized. However much the system of compromise platforms may be necessary to the success of a party, it is not in our judgment a very honest system, or at all favourable to the free progress of the truth. Christianity is shingled over with too many platforms and organizations now. They impede union and cordiality. The attempt to frame a set of articles for the great Evangelical Alliance did more to repel denominations from each other, than any effort of the nineteenth century. Men will often rise in favour of some particular scheme of action, and will act together heartily and harmoniously until they are asked to say, "Shibboleth," and then their pious impulses are chilled by the uprising of diverging remembrances, and they will not say "Shibboleth." The most of men are averse to

signing papers. They voluntarily say and do many things, which they will not formally bind themselves to say and do. It is often the case that the finest impulses are annihilated by the preliminary hewing and tinkering at a "Plan of Union," so that by the time the machinery is completed, there is no steam to drive it onwards. Creeds and constitutions have their place, and unfortunately cannot be dispensed with, but as far as is at all consistent with stability we are for leaving the Christian feelings to play unimpeded.

Hence we believe that if the whole subject of charity, in its primary sense, were taken up and worked out by the denominations severally, then there would be a spontaneous co-operation in all common enterprises. If, for example, any one started a good suggestion, such as a movement in behalf of Sabbath observance, it would be laid hold of promptly by all, acted upon, so far as might be demanded, in church courts,

advocated by pulpit and press, and if need be, brought before public meetings of Christians of all sects; not under a certain section of a certain defined constitution, but under the demand of a spontaneous Christian impulse, wishing to express itself at that particular time in that particular way, without any other platform than the idea then before the mind. No forming of associations at present among different denominations would avail anything. The work must begin deeper; it must begin in the radical ideas of the mind and the deep feelings of the heart: then will its influences come working up and working out into all and through all, the doings and sayings and departments of life. Then shall we realize that sublime spectacle of men of adverse creeds meeting together, principle and love kissing each other—then, without a particle of sacrifice of individual belief shall we see Christianity presenting a consistent aspect, making upon society a consistent impression,

all her diversities covered by an all-encompassing charity, as the inequalities in the body of the star are concealed within the pavilion of light which surrounds it.

Such a charity as this will likewise greatly facilitate the progress of truth, not only in the world at large, but among Christians themselves. It is the harsh mode of stating and advocating a truth which often repels the auditor and drives him into heresy. When the *suaviter in modo* is combined with the *fortiter in re*, the truth sinks into the mind, as the gentle rain does into the loosened soil. Love softens the ground for the good seed.

CHRISTIANITY AND GOVERNMENT.

As this paper has already far exceeded the limits designed by the writer, it is with great reluctance that we make any further allusion to the important topics in "Politics for American Christians." This part of the

field is ample and almost untrodden. Christian people having in the whole history of the Church, had so little opportunity to exercise their calm judgments about the proper influence of Christianity in government, the right principles are yet to be clearly defined. Our American Voluntary System being a reaction from the Establishment System of Europe, we have made the divorce between Christianity and the state too entire. Our author, in this volume brings not only Political Economy in general, but government, legislation, politics, entire, and places them likewise, at the feet of Jesus! (By this time the reader begins to suspect that he is not such an "*infidel*" after all.) He shows that in government there is necessarily a moral and religious element. The awful sanctions of religion are acknowledged to be necessary to impart dignity and power to all the leading affairs of government. This necessity has always been felt in every government, since the

days of Polybius, and before. Not only so, but there is a large class of immoralities which are so detrimental to the public weal that they are proper subjects of prohibitory legislation, and that as to this whole class of appropriate legislative materials, the people of a Christian land have a right to insist that Christian morality shall guide the legislator. And for our part, we see not why Christian people may not demand *any law* which they think would conduce to the public good. We do not regard government as the master but as the servant of society; not as a teacher but a pupil. And the people of society are bound to apply the principles of the Bible as far as possible in instructing the government. We hear of what is the province of government, as if it had any other province than to subserve the wishes of the people. Constitutions are only expressions of the will of the people at the time of framing it, and are liable to be altered whenever the public good may

demand an alteration. We do not believe in the infallibility of a political constitution, any more than we do in the infallibility of a church creed. Constitutions are made for man, not man for constitutions. But we begin thus high, not because we desire the least alteration in the constitution of our country, but to express strongly our conviction of the fact that the people ought to feel that they have a right to make any sort of government and laws they think best for the general good.

This general good would, of course, exclude the passage of laws enforcing any system of religious faith on the people, for that would be the violation of a principle, eminently conducive to the general good, viz.: that men ought to be left free to worship God as they think right, provided, in so doing, they do not disturb others. But, if men, in professing to follow their conscience, interfere with the order and security of society, or manifestly corrupt public morals,

then the public weal demands that they should be arrested in their course. In business, too, it is a good general principle, that all should be allowed to exert themselves unrestrained, until it is proved that their course damages the public welfare; then they should be stopped. And so as to social habits, public amusements, &c.—they should not be allowed to disturb or injure the community. Where the dividing line runs between Christian morality, as such, and government duty, no man can point out. It must be left to the decision of a free people, through their representatives. But a glance must convince any one that here is a field of observation and action, of vast importance, which has been almost wholly neglected. The people do not watch the legislatures with a Christian eye; and hence, our representatives do not feel the stringency of a united Christian sentiment bearing upon them. And in this negligence of the Christian public, is found the cause of the loose

morality, which is a fearful characteristic of this whole department of society. The demagogue feels scarcely restrained at all, in his unprincipled struggles to secure his election; or in his wasting of time and public money; or passing immoral laws, or neglecting to pass such laws as the public interest demands. When Christian people complain of corruption among politicians, and of bad legislation, they should remember that the sin lies at the door of the Christian public, who are asleep, as a mass, with regard to this whole subject. There never has been a time when the Christian influence was not strong enough in the country to carry any measure, they would vigorously unite to urge. It is so this day. Hence, the Christian people of this land are really *responsible* for their corruptions and omissions, which are often complained of. The account our author gives of the terrible venality of the Congress of the United States, is doubtlessly even below the truth, although he tells us

enough to make us blush and shudder. We once heard the late Gov. McDowell say, whilst standing in the Rotunda of the Capitol at Washington, "If the people of the country could be suddenly informed of the corruptions practised by their representatives, in this house, they would rise, *en masse*, and, moved by one simultaneous impulse, raze this building to its foundations, and bury all beneath its ruins!" It is cause of rejoicing that one has been found to lay open the hideous ulcer to public gaze. The people should not have permitted these things to be hidden from them thus long: and now that they are informed of it, they should lose no time in redressing the evil. Let every representative be studied, and if he be lacking in integrity, let him never again set foot in the halls of legislation.

It was to be anticipated that persons would condemn such views as these, under the influence of the popular prejudices against "Church and State." But let us have done with cant;

and bring our minds honestly and vigorously to bear upon this subject. Does the voluntary system of religion demand that government shall appropriate no moneys whatsoever for direct religious purposes? Then why do the people sit quietly under the Governmental Chaplaincy System—to support which large appropriations are annually made out of the public treasury? "Out of thine own mouth do I condemn thee." Man with a conscience! If such be your principle, why sit still while every ship in the Navy bears a minister of the Gospel, paid by government—whilst West Point Academy has its government chaplain, and the two Houses of Congress have each their chaplain! But if you admit the propriety of such religious provision, by government, for its own servants, why arrest it here! Why not appoint chaplains to the Custom-Houses and Post-Offices, and why should not the President have one for himself and Cabinet. The Congressmen have more opportu-

nity for attending public worship in the churches on the Sabbath than the deputy postmasters have. The postmasters must spend much of the Sabbath in opening and making up mails, and delivering letters: hence they seem specially to need a sort of missionary work among them. And we suspect a service in a city post-office, whilst the clerks are making up the mail, would be fully as orderly and edifying as many of the services in Congress. And whilst the custom-house officers are sauntering about the wharves on Sunday, watching against contraband operations, it might be well enough to set a spiritual watch over them. It may be inferred from these hints, that we have no great respect for the religious operations of Uncle Sam: but we do not wish to express a decided opinion, so much as to call attention to the lack of settled principles on this subject.

The civil oath, in its nature, is one of the most solemn acts of worship known on earth

it is an act of official worship by the State —and of Christian worship, too, as it is performed on the Bible. But what a call is there, that the Christian public should observe closely this practice of the State, lest it descend into sacrilege or superstition. The kissing of the Bible we consider a superstitious practice. But we feel far more wounded at the countless multiplications of the oath, and the hasty and irreverent manner in which it is administered, which, to our mind, seems like "profane swearing,"—like "taking the name of God in vain." But how indifferent are Christian people as to this growing governmental profanity.

But the religious element in our form of government is small, compared with what may be called, by way of distinction, the moral element. How hazy is the public mind upon this most important class of topics. We fear that defined principles on this point are as scarce as books on Charity. The theory of our government is, that the people are in-

directly the source of the laws. Now on what general principle do the people base such a movement, for example, as a legislative crusade against rum-selling; or against profane swearing, or against Sabbath-breaking, or gambling, or any other immorality? Can they say to their representatives, "You must enact laws against such and such vices, *because* they are forbidden in the Word of God?" If so, they imply the principle which leads to an establishment of religion as entire as it exists in Spain or Italy. The only safe ground is that of public order and safety. It is to this test alone, any such act can justifiably be brought.

But here there is a wide range, and an infinite series of possibilities. How impossible it would be to solve all such questions without some general guide which can be relied on as infallible. If individual cases are to be solved without broad moral principles, then all uniformity and certainty is impossible. But, admitting the Bible to have been

indited by Infinite Wisdom and Goodness, and to contain a summary of principles applying to all human relations, then we have an ever-present guide in forming our opinions as to what is best for society. We may feel sure, in the first place, that all positive vices specified in Scripture are, and must be, injurious to the public weal, and hence may fairly be prohibited so far as it is possible for laws to take effectual hold of the offence. It ought to be enough to convince a Christian mind that adultery is injurious to the public weal, to know that it is interdicted in the Decalogue; and so of murder, slander, fraud, stealing, and of all violations of what man owes to man. The object of law is to promote justice, right, harmony, safety among the people; and every vice in the whole catalogue is an opposing element to this design of law; and all that a citizen need determine is, whether a certain practice is or is not a vice. If it is, it should, if possible, be suppressed by law. Now, in determining

this, the believer has only to consult his Infallible Authority. It is certainly an inconsistency in any people professing to believe the Scriptures, to tolerate any legislation which contravenes any Scripture principle. It is to this test that legislation on usury, marriage, divorce, and all other topics whose principles are settled in Scripture, should be brought, not officially, but privately and conscientiously.

MAN THE BASIS OF LEGISLATION.

When we enter the department of positive legislation for the good of society, we have not as clear a set of principles drawn from Holy Writ as in the other case; but we have certain broad precepts, out of which innumerable practical principles may be evolved. One great principle is very clearly deducible from Scripture, viz., that the only proper object of our regard and care on earth is *man*. It is not land, or money, or manufactures,

nor is it landowners, capitalists, or manufacturers, that we are to love; but it is "*our neighbour.*" And, manifestly, Christian politics can lay no other foundation for its superstructure than this which is laid. It absolutely forbids all legislation for any class, unless that class constitute the greatest number of the people; and it requires the enactment of all laws which shall promote the greatest good of the greatest number.

There will indeed be cases in which the interests of a large minority would be seriously damaged, in which case a Christian spirit would require a waiving of the claims of the majority, unless those claims were very pressing and momentous.

But as a rule, the interest in which the greatest number of persons is involved demands to be primarily consulted and subserved; and, consequently, that system of politics which rests upon any other basis should be rejected by all those which wish to be governed by Christian principle. If

this be true, the interests of the labouring classes come in for the highest consideration, because the welfare of a greater number is here involved than in any other interest. Indeed, were wealth the basis of legislation, it might be shown that the annual proceeds of labour exceed that of all other forms of capital. But we reject this criterion, and claim that the question is chiefly, if not solely, a *numerical one.* In this sentiment we do not profess to represent our author, nor to have looked deeply into the subject of Political Economy; but we feel safe in following a clear Scriptural principle whithersoever it conducts us. We can see only mammonism in that system of politics which ciphers up the largest property interest, and makes that the *punctum stans* of the legislator. We do not care whether the land interest of the country is the largest or the smallest; we care much more to know whether there are not more workers on the land of others than possessors in fee simple. It is a very small thing to us to know how

many rolling-mills or cotton factories a certain man owns; but it is a very large matter to ascertain how many labourers are employed in his mills or factories, and how many of his neighbours find a market there for the products of their toil. And we feel bound to advocate the legislation which will secure to the great multitudes of workers employment at just and remunerative wages. And from this point should all legislation be developed. But we must refer the reader to the mature and pregnant thoughts on this general subject in "Politics for American Christians," and bring our desultory reflections to a close.

Our main object in this publication has been to assist in awakening a general interest in this whole class of topics, in order that the leading Christian minds of the day may be induced to apply their powers to this fresh and fertile field; and that it may not be left to the worthless comments of newspaper editors, and the impertinent puerilities of literary whipper-snappers.

ADDRESS.

ADDRESS

TO THE PROTESTANT CLERGY OF AMERICA.

Dear Brethren:

To you this whole subject appeals with a directness and force which you cannot innocently resist. To you Christ has committed the awful responsibility of expounding and inculcating the doctrines of his religion. If there be any truth in the charge that charity has been slighted in our standards, our preaching, our literature, our lives, how dare you withhold your utmost exertions to restore this "lost Pleiad" to the galaxy of heavenly doctrines? The eye of Christ is bending upon you. Your vows demand that you

shall "preach the Word in all its fulness;" before God's dread tribunal you must stand, and render your account; the souls of men are at stake; the entire hopes of all coming generations are involved; how can you "shun to declare the whole counsel of God!" So far as you are called of God to your office, you are the heaven-nominated class to lay hold of this subject, and give it the most thorough investigation. To refuse to do it, is to be wilfully recreant to the most solemn obligations which can be imposed upon man. And however your Master may excuse your thoughtlessness heretofore, now that your attention has been especially directed to it he demands your immediate efforts in the cause.

To shrink from it because you are not pleased with the mode of its presentation, is to indulge a spirit unworthy any magnanimous mind, much more a servant of the meek and forgiving Jesus. Bring objections as you may to this whole controversy, you

must admit that it has elicited some ideas which are both true and important. Why not take hold of these, and endeavour, according to your light, to fulfil your tremendous obligations?

This appeal is, by the author of New Themes, in the second edition of that work, thrown into the most pointed form. A prize of five hundred dollars, which has by the publishers been increased to a thousand dollars, is offered for the best work on Christian Charity, founded immediately on the teachings of Scripture. There is a most painful significancy in the silence with which that noble proposition has been met. Similar offers for works on other subjects usually excite a large number of competitors; and even on some branches of this very subject prizes have drawn forth numberless treatises designed for ecclesiastical tax-gathering; but when the Great Doctrine—the *Greatest Doctrine*—is proposed, and liberal inducements offered to all of every nation to compete for

it, it falls like the voice of Love upon the ear of Death! Ye thirty thousand American Protestant ministers, are there none of all your learned body whose hearts respond to such a call as this? If that offer should stand unaccepted for the two years to which it is limited, let no man have the effrontery to deny the extremest charge which "New Themes" brings against "Protestant Clergy."

Remember your vast influence in society, especially among Christian people. At your lips the people expect to hear the law. How terrible your account, if, knowing the truth, you fail to teach it! Supposing that, personally, you are to suffer for rendering a bold testimony to the truth; supposing that your church is likely to be damaged; what are you, and what your denomination, compared with the truth of God and the good of man?

But it is a false impression to suppose that either you or your church can suffer real detriment from taking earnest hold of this Scriptural theme. Indeed, the very way to

bring on what you would avoid, is to neglect it. The world is waking to this negligence on the part of the Church, which, if it continues, will breed a generation of infidels, or at least occasion an annihilation of existing church organizations. Naught can avert a moral earthquake but a speedy obedience to the spirit of Christianity. Even within a half-century the whole foreign missionary movement has come into play; why may not the next half-century witness a progress equally great in our home Christianity? But do as *you* may, the *work* will go on. "The Word of God is not bound." It moves like a spirit of air, going to and fro, walking up and down on the earth. Out of the skies its angel voice sounds an evangel for every benighted company of men. The prisoner through his grate-bars will hear good tidings of great joy. Men, indeed, instead of helping to liberate the captive, have often tried to manacle the Great Liberator. But, though often tied, shorn, and blinded, Christianity

will ere long snap the flaxen cords, and seize hold of the pillars of many a Philistine temple.

Let us awake, dear brethren, to the appeals which are sounding around us. Let the scathed and bleeding limbs of the fettered millions of our race touch our deepest sympathies. How do their chains clank around us, and every breeze come laden with the blows of the knout; and how do the chain-gangs of Satan defile past us in long and melancholy processions! There is no time to be lost! Let each one hearken to the voice of Wisdom: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, in the grave whither thou goest."

THE END.

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